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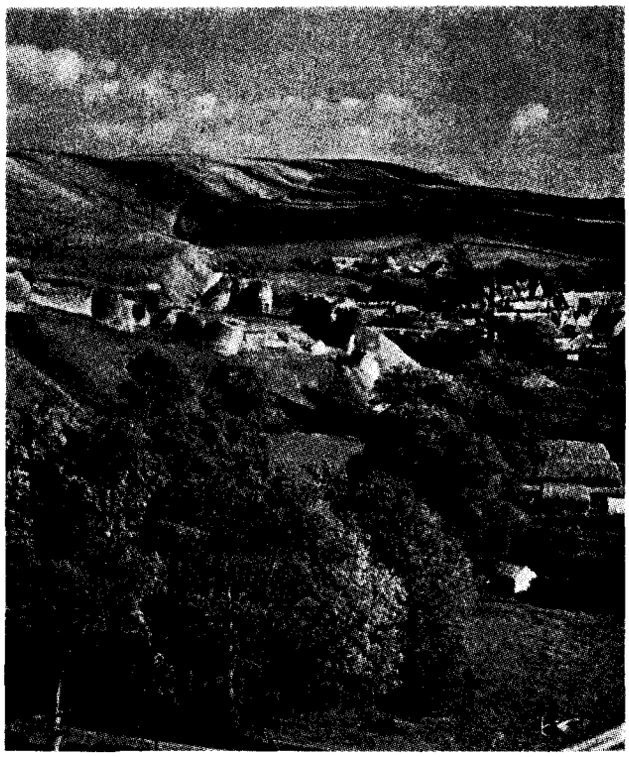
Charles Morgan and the Modern Temper*

BY WILSON FOLLETT

G. K. CHESTERTON long ago divided modern readers into those who like life and long novels and those who like death and short stories. His classification has lost none of its inner and spiritual pertinence as an account of two categories of reader: but what a strange fate has overtaken it as a dictum about two categories of fiction. For during the quarter-century past we have seen the long novel itself become a purveyance of death. More than the short story ever was, it is the characteristic latterday vehicle for transience, for dissolution, for the smell of decay. To the long novel Mr. Chesterton's second sort of reader turns as instinctively today as once he turned to the short tale. If the virtuoso of paradox were to re-edit his aphorism today he would perhaps divide readers into those who like life and the long novels of the past and those who prefer death and the long novels of the present.



THE SPARKENBROKE COUNTRY
Photograph of Dorset country by Charles E. Brown, from "The Landscape of England" (Scribners).

Considered as an instrumentality of death, the short story has never been in a position to compete with the novel as we now have it. For, after all, the classic short story was an evasion of life rather than a flat contradiction of it. It showed life arrested in its tracks, frozen in arbitrarily selected aspects, foreshortened by artifice to serve a technical exigency of presentation, and necessarily shorn of the continuity, the growth, of life as the novelist saw it. But at least it implied life, even if it had not the room to contain it. The novel, on the other hand, has progressively become an out-and-out denial of life, and we know the novelist best today as clinician, pathologist, performer of autopsies, and, one is inclined to add, mortician.

The novel had begun to experiment with various implications of the will-to-death long before 1914, but the war and its aftermath supplied a tremendous impetus by wholesale production of mutilated, shell-shocked, maladjusted survivors with no mood but despair and no recourse but sensation. They became standardized as subjects for fiction, along with women made in their image and an appropriate philosophy of moral defeatism. The official Bible of the new inverted religion became "Ulysses" (1922). The influence of James Joyce, essentially a novelists' novelist and would-be novelists' novelist, gradually penetrated the current modes of writing until many who perhaps never read "Ulysses" were writing dilutions of it. Presently we had an Ernest Hemingway rewriting "The Green Hat" for a little jauntier clientèle ("The Sun Also Rises"), an Aldous Huxley ("Point Counter Point"), a John Dos Passos ("Manhattan Transfer"), a Ben Hecht ("Erik Dorn"), a William Faulkner ("The Sound and the Fury"), and many another—diverse talents, but as one in their insistence that life is something between a meaningless poignant joke and a shambles. It is worthy of remark that when women, the bearers of life and supposedly among its chief incentives, go in for mutilation, abnormality, futility, and the death of the spirit, they go in for it about as intensively as anyone (Virginia Woolf, Kay Boyle, Elizabeth Bowen). It is also noteworthy that the writers in whom the love of life runs strong tend more and more to be forced away from the current realities into burlesque or satire (Sinclair Lewis) or into the past of history (Miss Cather in her exquisite "Shadows on the Rock"; Mr. Kenneth Roberts in "Arundel" and its superb sequel, "Rabble in Arms"). An interesting, perhaps illuminating footnote to this observation is the work of Mr. James Boyd, who has a comparable vitality when he withdraws into the American past ("Drums," "Marching On"), but as soon as he approaches the present ("Roll, River") succumbs to the prevalent self-analysis and self-pity.

Compared, then, with "Ulysses" and its morbific progeny, the short story of the past was a hale and vital phenomenon, bursting with red corpuscles. It is only when put beside the very great novels from Dickens to Thomas Mann that it looks suddenly anemic.

As an exhalation of mortality, what else of Poe or Maupassant or Bierce is to be named in the same breath with almost any chapter by the author of "The Fountain," who is now the author of "Sparkenbroke"? All such minor prophets of dissolution compare with Mr. Charles Morgan only as some crude isolated act of murderous violence compares with the pestilence that walketh in darkness.

Mr. Morgan goes a long step farther than the rest of our contemporary death-dealers by making death, from the first sentence, overtly his subject. For the length of two average novels it remains his appointed culmination. What passes for human life in his fifty-three chapters

* *SPARKENBROKE. By Charles Morgan. New York: The Macmillan Company.* 1936. $2.75.

Next Week

THE STORY OF A NOVEL
By THOMAS WOLFE
Reviewed by Bernard DeVoto

THE STORY OF CONGRESS
By ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES
Reviewed by Lindsay Rogers

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is essentially a prologue to death. Life is merely an assortment of broken arcs: death supplies the perfect round. Toward the tomb all events and all emotions draw the characters, and with them the reader, in the manner of the still river that runs deep—that is, even more powerfully under the surface than on it. Death is Mr. Morgan's real hero, and it would be almost proper to say that it is his real religion. It is, in any event, Sparkenbroke's religion. For Sparkenbroke is the author of a somberly witty inverted credo in which the Pauline triad of faith, hope, and charity becomes the Morganian triad of poetry, love, and death. And now abideth poetry, love, death, these three: but the greatest of these is death.

Piers Tenniel (1892-1928), the seventh Viscount and twelfth Baron Sparkenbroke, is a predestined twentieth-century Byron who at the romantic age of twelve puts in some hours locked up in the tomb of his exalted ancestors. When rescued from among the coffins he is awakened out of what proves to be a trance of incommunicable ecstasy. From that moment he is as one whose lips have been brushed in a dream by the lips of a radiant goddess. Piers Tenniel has fallen in love with surcease. His life becomes a quest through labyrinths for the grand simplicity, the finality, of his first love, death. By his middle thirties he has recovered fugitive hints and vestiges of this simplicity in two spheres of action: the unbridled sensualism which has brought him notoriety, and his laborious composition of the poems and novels which have brought him fame. His conclusion from experience is that the supreme good is mergence of the self. The melting into another human being in fleshly love is a tantalizing symbol of this mergence. The resolution of a poet's creative torment into the tangible unity and inevitability of a poem is something more than a symbol; but it is a fleeting, recurrent, enormously difficult attainment, and it has to be paid for with endless anticipatory periods of tension and struggle. Only the grave, then, brings harmony without one discordant overtone. Death is the sublime, the final mergence, the pinnacle without a descent beyond, the deliverance that is forever. Life has its compensations, of which the chief are its rare foretastes of death; but death itself needs no compensation, for it is utter and perfect fulfilment.

Now, if this creed is not an exact and inclusive *reductio ad absurdum* of the position occupied by what is commonly referred to as the modern mind, I do not know where we are to look for such a *reductio*. What is the preëminent talent of this modern mind if not its talent for the negation of life? What do our contemporary arts express but a revolt from life? What are our social and political philosophies formulating but the dream of an escape from life?

The clue to the more articulate manifestations of modern behavior is the refusal of the modern spirit to accept life whole because, forsooth, not all of its ingredients have the harmonious, unproblematic finality of the tomb. Life happens to contain a certain amount of confusion, waste, and pain; and some of it happens to be inalienable. Feebly and partially, the modern man desires life, or thinks he does; but he will not put up with these inalienable defects of its qualities. He hankers for all the great compensations of living, but he hates the effort and the discipline without which they can never be gained and would mean nothing if gained. He has a fancy for freedom, security, leisure, self-expression, and other benefits which have to be fought for and perpetually earned anew; but he expects them to be dumped into his lap. In the pursuit of great and unique sensations he lets his existence degenerate into such an incessant search for excitement as must end by making all sensations alike and none worth having. Thus his very flight from the ultimate horror, boredom, guarantees his overtaking it from behind as he runs.

There is no positive good available to humankind which this modern man does not contrive to turn into negation and death by refusing something which is part of it as thorns are part of roses. He craves to be greatly loved, but he shrinks from the risk of greatly loving. Obsessed with the importance of sex, he carefully guards himself from any experience of its basic importance. (The intellectual, like the revolutionist, has no children; and if he had them he would still be no father.) He has the run of all the bright ideas extant, he has been everywhere, he has seen and sampled everything, he commands the fashionable patter of the current esthetic intellectualism — and the only thing he believes in is disillusionment. He sidesteps responsibility: to commit himself to anything on earth deeply enough to get the real good of it would stultify his universal knowingness. His faculty of choice has become atrophied in a sterile eclecticism, a facile cosmopolitanism. His will is paralyzed. Spoiled darling of his time, educated far beyond his capacity for wisdom, arrogant in the assumed superiority of his defects, he goes through life snubbing and patronizing it because it lacks the restful extinguishment of nirvana; and all his ways of life are forms of death.

He is, to be sure, no new apparition in either society or literature. Joseph Conrad, for one, several times drew his likeness—the most definitively in the figure of Martin Decoud, in "Nostromo." Decoud is the man upon whom the ironies and inconsistencies of life crowd in unmanageably as soon as he is left alone with his restless, skeptical brain, deprived of the last saving opportunity to submerge himself in the action in which he has never truly believed. Overwhelmed and shattered when driven to confront at leisure the incoherence of an existence which quite lacks the splendid serenity and logic of death, he blows out his brains to blot out the monstrous and mocking disorder of the spectacle.

But Martin Decoud, unlike Lord Sparkenbroke, is seen throughout for what he is: a clever, uprooted fellow with a nimble brain, formed in no disciplinary tradition, stayed by no principle of continuity, and weighted at the base with just too little simplicity of character to stand erect against the thrust of his ironic imagination. He is at no time invested with glamour and held up to idolatry, as Sparkenbroke is; it is never pretended that his self-destroying weaknesses are his unique powers; and he is not suffered to dominate the whole book. What is actually new and astonishing in the world is the extent to which the very principle of self-destruction, incorporated in the Sparkenbrokes and their kind, has come to dominate the intellectual horizon of our time, and especially the extent to which it has preëmpted the field of imaginative writing.

Sparkenbroke himself does not, like Decoud, commit suicide. His life, not his death, is self-destruction. The whole point is that the man's philosophy and his temperament work together as one to make his thirty-six Byronic years a long-drawn death-in-life, the unavailing struggle of a congenital poseur to be born. To create such a philosophy as his means in the end to become its creature. The test of tests occurs when Sparkenbroke finds the woman who, it almost seems, might have made love something more than a fleeting premonition of death.

For years on end of casual, sometimes cruel, amours the poet-peer has scoffed aloud at his own secret dream of a self-

(*Continued on page* 14)

Summary for a Lady

By EUNICE TIETJENS

SHE has such exquisite precision
In everything she does and says,
To watch her is to feel one's vision
Geometrically appraise.

Her every gesture is thematic
As something stated on the flute,
At once precise and enigmatic,
Suggested, yet beyond dispute.

She is as thoughtfully exotic
As the last phoenix of the air—
And quite as changeful and despotic
As lovely women everywhere!

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He Was An Englishman

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF JOHN GALSWORTHY. By H. V. Marrot. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1936. $5.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

MR. MARROT was a meticulous bibliographer to John Galsworthy; as a biographer he is no less so. His book is a monument of diligence and devotion. It charts every step in that career which went so smoothly upwards to best-sellerdom and the Nobel Prize and the Order of Merit. It tells you that Galsworthy was sweet-tempered, generous, self-confident, critical, reticent; that he worked enormously hard; that he was extremely English. It is crammed with correspondence to and from eminent men. It is like a summer heath, filled with gorse; pleasantly monotonous and rather difficult to wade through. Galsworthy was a good man, and good men do not lend themselves to biography, unless they are saints or politicians; so that a more detached observer than Mr. Marrot might have picked a fault here and there, but not have drawn a better picture.

The most moving page in this book is numbered xiv and devoted to Acknowledgements. It recites the names of eminent men, Galsworthy's friends and fellow-craftsmen, now dead. It reads like a dirge. It *is* a dirge.

For Galsworthy belonged to the rear-guard of a great tradition; he was an Edwardian. His most important (because most vital) work was done before the war, with "The Man of Property" and "Fraternity" and "Strife." The writers and playwrights who surrounded him are almost all dead, and the solidity of their creative work is not likely to be repeated, because they were the last of the reforming writers. I don't see how anybody, unless he accepts the importance of reform in the English imagination, can quite appreciate the dilemma of contemporary English letters. Pre-war reform meant, not tearing the house of English polity down, but putting it in order. You admired the firmness of its foundations, its architecture was far from displeasing, the lawns and the rose gardens were admirable: but how about improving the servants' quarters, and putting in a new plumbing system, and raising wages, and letting the public use the park if it promised to tidy up? That was pre-war reform, a passionate desire to preserve, by improvement, the shape of things as they were. It was extinguished with the Liberal Party, and today it is merely the technique of Tory government and Labor evasion; but it was the very mainspring of writers like Galsworthy, it impregnated the air which his contemporaries breathed, and the new writers have failed to find a substitute for it. Perhaps English creative literature is not very happy in a tottering society; perhaps we shall have to wait until that society has finished tottering, and quite collapsed, before we get a new generation of British novelists.

In all these 804 meticulous pages, the most important are those which lie between 162 and 396, between "The Man of Property" and the war. It was in this time that Galsworthy identified himself with Liberalism's most tragic aspiration, which was to bring about a spiritual readjustment in the life of men. If you could legislate the soul of man, or legislate the character of legislators, there would still be a Liberal majority at Westminster; and there would have been, one cannot help thinking, an undercurrent of hope in "The Forsyte Saga." The war killed Galsworthy's hope, just as it dispersed that curious and paradoxical spirit of international insularity which was the spirit of Edwardian literature. Thereafter he improved only in technique and in the size of his royalties.

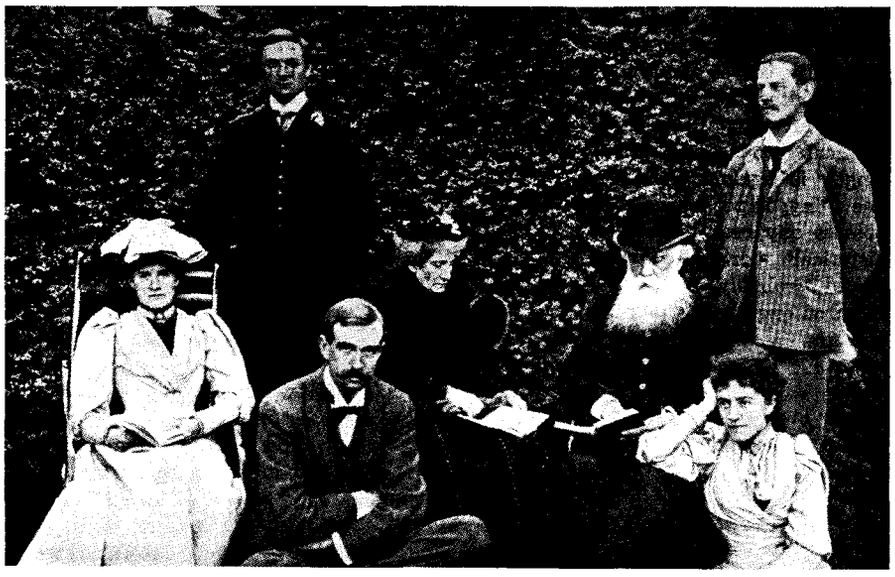
Mr. Marrot has not attempted an evaluation of Galsworthy as a novelist, but there are certain clues in this book as to why he wrote the way he did. Specifically, you will find them on pages 18, 19, 28, and 57. On these pages appear some portraits of ancestors and relatives and of the country from which they came. They were extraordinarily handsome people, proud and confident and reserved; their home was a seaward Devonshire farm. They were yeomen; and though Galsworthy had risen into the upper-middle classes, theirs was a long hand. You might almost say that it wrote his books.

Why *did* people maintain that his novels were melancholy and sentimental and frigid? Mr. Marrot, much concerned, has tried to disprove this by pointing to the little known fact of Galsworthy's marriage, that it was a deep and beautiful love relation. But a man's private life has little bearing on his writing. Something was lacking in Galsworthy's art—that not to be negotiated hairsbreadth which separates talent from genius, which distinguished the melancholy of Cowper from the madness of Blake and the tattle of Mr. Creevy from the gossip of Walpole. Galsworthy's work was typical, which is why it had no genius; it was the fine flower of English yeomanry, it was bred out of generations of quiet living, it should delight the believers in heredity. It could express everything but passion; it had an ultimate and fatal and English reserve.

To the meaning in these portraits, one might add three facts. That the most impassioned piece of writing in this book is a letter which Galsworthy wrote to a gentleman who had caged a hawk. His comment on D. H. Lawrence—"Interesting, but a type I could not get on with, Obsessed with self. Dead eyes and a red beard, long narrow pale face. Strange bird." His description of his own writing. "It is absolutely clear in style, and not in the least exotic, and can be read by the average person without straining the intellect." Three facts which suggest, crudely, the picture of the writer. (For the picture of the man, there is Beerbohm's sentence—"I liked you so much at once; and that feeling has been cumulative ever since.")

We have already had our say on him, whether as novelist or playwright: the next say belongs to our grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I do not think that they will read him. But if they come across this book, in some corner of a twenty-first century library, they will wish—as I wish—that they had known him.

George Dangerfield is the author of a recent book on Edwardian history, "The Strange Death of Liberal England."



A FAMILY GROUP: *Seated, Mabel Galsworthy, J. Fair, Galsworthy's parents, and Lily Galsworthy; standing, J. W. Hills and John Galsworthy.*

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Republican Prospects

FRANK KNOX, AMERICAN. By Norman Beasley. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1936. $1.

THIS MAN LANDON. By Frederick Palmer. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1936. $1.50.

BORAH OF IDAHO. By Claudius O. Johnson. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1936. $3.

Reviewed by ROBERT C. BROOKS

BIOGRAPHY, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is "the history of the lives of individual men as a branch of literature." Accepting this definition it is evident that the sub-species known as campaign biography may fall short of the ideal in two of the three particulars involved. Literary quality may be lacking; history may be garbled. Haste is likely to be requisite in the compilation of such works—hence the first sin. History of the life of an individual written from the point of view of his fitness for nomination to, and service in, a given office—in this case the Presidency—is almost certain to be distorted; hence the second and much graver sin.

Perhaps tests of the Oxford Dictionary type are too severe for application to two of the three works noted above. Campaign biographers have an eminently practical end in view; "mere literature," to use one of Woodrow Wilson's phrases, is no concern of theirs. If the subject celebrated in such a work actually becomes President it may be held that a brilliant success has been scored. It is doubtful, however, whether any one of the innumerable campaign biographies produced in the United States has contributed materially to the nomination and election of the person celebrated therein. Candidates usually distribute copies of their "Lives" gratis and with a lavish hand; orators and editors may quote them occasionally, but as a rule they play an altogether minor part in the far-flung network of political propaganda. Their length is against them for one thing; if perchance they possess any real literary or historical merit that also would probably be against them among the party rank and file.

FRANK KNOX

"Frank Knox, American," by Norman Beasley, is a typical campaign biography, if anything rather better than the average. It is also a success story raised to the *n*th degree, particular emphasis being laid upon the more popular traits of the candidate. The early struggles of the hero against poverty are detailed in the best log-cabin-to-the-White-House manner. Throughout the remainder of this rather artless tale Knox is represented as pursuing "two great parallel careers, one in journalism and the other in politics." "He jumped into both with the roaring energy of a typhoon." He is "a super-publisher, one who was a great administrator and budget balancer as well as a great editor and publisher." It is notable that, according to Mr. Beasley, whenever Knox's energy was not "volcanic"—it was "typhonic"—the latter word apparently being coined for the purposes of this biography. Due attention is paid to his military achievements; indeed he possesses a double "war record" since he was engaged in both the Spanish-American and the World War. Knox's "labor record" is summed up trenchantly as follows: "thirty-five years of close coöperation with the mechanical forces of his papers, never marred by a strike." On the other hand Mr. Beasley deserves credit for conceding a few mistakes on the part of his hero. One of these—introduced perhaps as something of a concession to reactionary Republicans—was Knox's part in urging his "old Colonel" to bolt in 1912. Indeed Knox is represented as taunting Theodore Roosevelt with showing a "yellow streak" before the latter finally summoned up the courage to announce that "my hat is in the ring." (!)

Viking Studio
ALFRED M. LANDON

Knox's quite considerable achievements in the newspaper world are recorded at length by Mr. Beasley; on the other hand comparatively little is said of the four years he spent in the service of William Randolph Hearst before becoming publisher of the Chicago *Daily News*. Finally a chapter is devoted to the candidate's, at first tolerant, more recently hostile, attitude toward the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Mr. Beasley makes it evident that Knox was a newspaper man by vocation, a politician occasionally only by avocation. Unfortunately, his efforts in the latter field were largely promotional, being confined to primaries and conventions. If his candidacy for the Republican nomination to the governorship of New Hampshire in 1924 had been successful it would be possible to weigh his merits, unquestionably great in private business, as the administrator of a public elective office. Of course editors of partisan newspapers perform valuable functions. In the nature of the case, however, they are critics rather than doers. Mr. Beasley is only moderately successful in presenting Knox as presidential timber. On the other hand, quite without intending it, the author does establish fully his candidate's supreme fitness for the position of Chairman (or Treasurer) of the Republican National Committee in the coming campaign.

Compared with his extended study of "Newton D. Baker," published five years ago, readers of Col. Frederick Palmer's "This Man Landon" will find it a rather hurried and inferior piece of work. In spite of its sketchy and impressionistic character, however, it does succeed in portraying the governor of Kansas in a fairly complete and distinctly appealing manner. Considerable portions of the text are given over to excerpts from Landon's speeches: dry and matter of fact for the most part, still they are easily the most valuable pages in the book. Eight chapters are devoted to Landon's two terms as governor of Kansas. Less critical, of course, than recent magazine discussions of the same subject this portion of the book presents interesting materials on the Cash Basis law, the handling of state patronage, federal aid and the administration of relief, the Finney bank scandal, public utilities, automobile taxes, state highways, and, finally, on the candidate's attitude toward New Deal policies. Col. Palmer's comparison of the governorship with the presidency overstates the importance of the former office out of all bounds. On the other hand he establishes conclusively that Landon has shown rather remarkable gifts as an administrator of the affairs of the Commonwealth of Kansas—a fact which gives him a distinct advantage over such relatively inexperienced competitors as Knox. In the prophetic as compared with the historical portion of his work Col. Palmer is less successful; his six chapters under the heading "If He Were President" approximate the sort of ballyhoo which Landon himself is reputed to avoid scrupulously. It is to be regretted that Col. Palmer gave such scant attention to "Goat Gland" Dr. Brinkley, Landon's opponent for the governorship in 1932. To overcome so redoubtable a medico-politico was quite an achievement; moreover some account of the radio physician's campaign methods and promises would have afforded much needed comic relief.

A number of the Kansas governor's backers are mentioned by Col. Palmer, notably Richard Lloyd Jones, "the original Landon man." Curiously enough—and rather ungratefully also—the name of William Randolph Hearst is not so much as mentioned once in the 229 pages of this campaign biography. Perhaps Governor Landon, following Woodrow Wilson's example, is preparing to george-

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harveyize his yellow journalistic promoter in the near future.

Professor Claudius O. Johnson's "Borah of Idaho" is biography in the fullest and most exacting sense of that word. The suspicion that it was just another campaign document—a suspicion natural enough because of the prominence of the Senator in the present pre-convention struggle—did not outlast the reading of half a dozen pages. To be sure Borah's fitness for the Presidency, whether it be rated high or low, rests upon his long career as a statesman, here set forth completely and critically. Nevertheless, this topic is dealt with specifically only in the final chapter of the book and then to no greater extent than a brief paragraph containing five sentences. Throughout Professor Johnson maintains the attitude of the historical scholar, diligent in research, careful in statement. In no sense, therefore, is his book a hasty journalistic improvisation. On the contrary it represents more than two years of thorough investigation including the reading of the Senator's voluminous correspondence; it makes use also of frequent conversations with him and with those who know him best.

Harris & Ewing
WILLIAM E. BORAH

There is, indeed, more than a hint of Boswell in the author's relations to his subject; in many passages the opinions of the Senator regarding important events in his career are presented sympathetically but quite frankly. However, Professor Johnson does not hesitate to introduce his own theories regarding the motivation of the so-called "Inscrutable One"; indeed some of the most incisive pages of the book are of this character.

Quite apart from their biographical interest the first six chapters of "Borah of Idaho," which deal with his childhood and young manhood, are well worth reading because of the pictures they contain of the Middle and Far West during the later decades of the nineteenth century. With Chapter VII "the National Statesman emerges," and from this point to the end of the book biography comes close indeed to history, that is the history of the country as a whole from 1907 to the present date, including all the presidents from Theodore to Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Senator Borah does not belong among the ranks of those statesmen who never made a mistake. "He voted for the war [April 4, 1917] with extreme regret, and of all the votes he has cast in the United States Senate, he would like most to go back and change that vote." He regrets his opposition in 1916 to the confirmation of Brandeis as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. In 1930 he also voted against the confirmation of Chief Justice Hughes; if he feels any regret on that score he does not express it. On the confirmation of Harry M. Daugherty for the Attorney Generalship, Borah wrote in 1925: "I permitted the matter to go by. I felt then and I have felt a thousand times afterwards that I did not do my duty."

Professor Johnson is at considerable pains to harmonize Borah's policies throughout. On this subject there will be, as there has long been, no small amount of controversy. Undoubtedly the Senator was influenced at times by personal friendship, as, for example, when he defended Theodore Roosevelt against Foraker on the Brownsville affair. If Henry F. Pringle's conclusion on that *cause célèbre* in his "Theodore Roosevelt" is accepted Borah would have to offer apologies here also. The Senator's support of the "I took Panama" policy belongs in the same category. While thus influenced occasionally by friendship, Borah's opposition to the proposals of various presidents is represented as based on reasons of state, wholly free from personal feeling. Woodrow Wilson generously recognized this fact in spite of the bitterness he felt over the defeat of the League of Nations. Regardless of the rectitude of the Senator's motives, however, it is clear that during his long service in Washington he has accumulated numerous political animosities which will doubtless come to the surface at Cleveland in June.

It would be hard to sum up better the Idahoan's relationship to the Republican party, often clouded as it was by periods of sulking in his tent, than in the following words:

> The lack of interest in Borah's liberal ideas on the part of nearly all the other [Republican] leaders may have made them somewhat less grateful than they would have been otherwise, but they recognized the value of having a liberal like Borah speak for the Republican party. He could give it a liberal stamp before the people and the party could reap the benefit without itself becoming liberal. The Senator has always tried to reform, sometimes to purify, the party from within. The party leaders have used him to great advantage on various occasions, but to date the party has not adopted many of his ideas.

In addition to its other excellences Professor Johnson's "Borah of Idaho" is well illustrated by numerous photographs of the Senator and his associates; it is enlivened by many cartoons used for or against him during his campaigns; it is —and all scholars will applaud at this— adequately indexed. In short we have here no mere campaign biography; on the contrary this is "the definitive Borah."

Robert C. Brooks is head of the Department of Political Science at Swarthmore. He is the author of "Political Parties and Electoral Problems."

A Drama of the Past

THE KING'S GOOD SERVANT. By Olive B. White. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by GARRETT MATTINGLY

IN "The Fountain" there is a long discussion of the difficulty and fascination of trying to recreate, by an effort of the mind and imagination, the mood and intellectual temper of a vanished past, and particularly of how, thereby, a writer might pierce through to some permanent aspect of character and lay bare some of the underlying mind-stuff of our own age. "The King's Good Servant" is such a book as Charles Morgan must have meant. In form it is a historical novel about the last years of the life of Sir Thomas More; it begins with More's return from the Cambrai peace conference in 1529, follows his career as Lord Chancellor, traces his dawning apprehension of what Henry VIII's quarrel with Rome must bring forth, and ends with his martyrdom on the scaffold.

This novel is no simple escape into a more romantic time, works no careless embroidery on the ground of history, silently avoids the easy glitter of swords and pennons. Singly, almost austerely, it seeks what happened in men's minds. At first reading one is tempted to say that nothing has been invented. The characters, the events, the chronology, most of the conversations come straight from authentic sources. Even the added details are how things must have been. And yet this book could only be written as fiction. By a daring device, quietly adopted, the reader sees More's home at Chelsea, the king's court, the cold walls of the Tower, wholly through More's eyes, hears the debates in council, the talk in Rastell's print shop, the murmur of the crowd in the street as More heard them; Tunstall, Wolsey, Norfolk, Cromwell, Henry himself, each presents the facet of his character turned towards More, becoming so many mirrors to throw back to us the observing figure at the center. Above all, the rumor of the rising storm, threatening the death of feudal England and of a united Europe, comes to us as it came to Chelsea, and the decisions of More's conscience, bringing the axe nearer at every step, seem as inevitable to us as to him. So fiction reveals a truth inaccessible to history, and the tense, tragic conflict of a scrupulous mind at odds with its age can dispense with all fictitious heightening. To recreate thus, without archaism or affectation, a personal drama of the past under its enduring aspect is a considerable triumph, not to be achieved without long and careful meditation, nor wholly to be enjoyed without a corresponding effort. But the effort is richly rewarding.

Garrett Mattingly has just been awarded a Guggenheim fellowship to pursue a historical study.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Writers Wanted

IT was somewhat audaciously stated some time ago in these columns that there are too many novels about Maine and Mississippi. Correspondents from Vermont, California, Louisiana, and Delaware wrote in hearty agreement. The law of diminishing returns, they said, had begun to apply. But literature is not like scholarship, which often must work and rework the same ploughed land for smaller and smaller yields. The fields of literature have more than three dimensions.

It is interesting therefore to list in a purely speculative fashion some of the still rich areas in American experience, where there should be still loam in the meadows and gold in the hills.

First in what might be called pre-history. Why have novelists and narrative poets neglected so strangely the pre-Pilgrim, pre-Jamestown century of our North American era? The years of the 1500's, when the coast from Long Island up was familiar to hundreds of fishermen adventurers who, caring nothing for maps or settlements, yet sailed our waters and foregathered annually in such a winter haven as Monhegan Island. By their old age they had forgot more of American geography than the explorers knew a century after them. Also to the Southward were the Spaniards, pushing their missions from sea island to estuary as far as the Chesapeake.

And in a later century the Indian traders, and the liberty lovers escaping from civilization, who were at home in the West before geographers had got beyond the Alleghanies. There was a life of extraordinary psychological interest in which for a while men of our culture became barbarians by hundreds if not thousands, and from all accounts happy barbarians. The framework of the complex Indian civilization was then complete, and into this they fitted without destructive superiority, yet endowed with a natural aristocracy by their weapons, their tools, their white skins, and their more flexible minds.

Or after history had begun its records, consider New England in the West. Here was a peculiar people, as peculiar, and as little liked by their neighbors, as the Israelites. Shaped by the super-Protestantism of Calvin, made mentally agile by rebellion against this stiff-necked creed, generation after generation from Roger Williams to the Unitarians, were passionate in two things only, education and reform. Then suddenly the Indians gave way and they are spilled into the vast physical spaces of the West. There, as Margaret Fuller said, when she saw them in Ohio, freedom of mind insensibly degenerates into freedom of action. When they can do what they like on their sprawling acres, they no longer trouble to think what they like. Spiritual tension gives way to common sense. Theology gives place to morals. Instead of the Mathers, the Adamses, the Thoreaus, and the Emersons, one gets the Ohio presidents.

Or for a psychology even more interesting, consider the American business front as it rolled over the country in the decades after the Civil War. History and biography have been active in discussing its period of heroic barbarism—the bandits, the guerrilla leaders, the true Napoleons of finance who crushed in order to build and yet never (like Napoleon) got their plans for empire clear of vanity, greed, and low-grade personal satisfactions. But neither history nor biography but only works of the imagination can solve the curious psychology of the successive states of mind they left behind them. The strange messianic quality of the predator-philanthropists! The passion for education, peace, public health, organized religion, art which left the twentieth century with no capitalistic plan for the orderly economic procedure of a great state such as one might have expected from the kind of genius that went before, but rather a system, if it can be called that, which in bad times was only one remove from anarchy, and which in good times perpetuated and increased the inequality of privilege and fortune against which the founders of these vast enterprises had in the beginning to fight. While in place of economic coherence, what did emerge was an extraordinary edifice of institutions devoted to public service in applied science and the humanities, here and all around the world, which drew their life blood from a capitalism whose own problems were left unsolved. Neither the Italian Renaissance, nor Elizabethan England, nor the French revolution presented a challenge to the imagination more provocative than this.

Or the alien. One would say that the immigrant had been written and overwritten. Not at all. The imagination has scarcely begun to grasp the richness for literature of this American experience. Here we have the graveyard and the slow resurrection of a dozen cultures: French, Germans, Italians, Slavs, Jews, pushing into a new world where an English civilization beat down their defenses and an expanding environment stimulated change. There is the dangerous drop of the second generation into a sham Americanism, the slow recovery of adjustment, the subtle influences of alien upon native *mores*, the slow emergence of a new type which even yet is a puzzle to science and to the moralist. For who yet knows whether there is a racial temperament that persists through change of environment and will make the ultimate American a new type which the influences of a new continent are not sufficient to explain.

There is the Negro. Have we more than begun with the Negro? There is the Pacific Coast, in which a Mediterranean culture seems to be creating itself under the astonished eyes of the Middle West. There is the American undergraduate, who, after generations of docility in an atmosphere of sport and genteel training, is suddenly becoming critical and articulate. There is the patent failure of wealth in the United States to achieve a good life for itself, its disorders and maladjustments annotated but not explained by the sensational press. There is—but this is no catalogue of prophecies. Any competent observer can fill out this column. We have observers enough—the best trained students of society in the world, the most clamorous and critical intellectuals. What seems to be needed is more imagination. Subjects for the creative writer lie as thick as boulders on an upland pasture in Connecticut. We can use more real writers, though we might do with fewer books.

Ten Years Ago

In The Saturday Review of April 17, 1926, Henry Seidel Canby devoted his leading editorial to a review of Thomas Beer's "The Mauve Decade," describing it as a "*brilliant and curious study of the late '80s and the '90s . . . not history at all in any recognized classification, but rather impressionistic literature in which, facet by facet, the form and pressure of a period are put together and made to sparkle from every angle.*" And, he concluded that although the book was "*too inconsecutive for easy reading, too full of . . . epigrams to be altogether true,*" it demonstrated "*the failure of soberer writers to get at the truth with their laborious progressions of cause and effect.*"

In the same issue Ernest Peixotto reviewed "Virgin Spain," by Waldo Frank; Frederick S. Dellenbaugh reviewed Zane Grey's "Tales of Fishing in Virgin Seas"; and William Rose Benét reviewed John Masefield's "Odtaa," a novel of adventure whose unusual title was supposed to have been derived from the author's own description of it as "One Damn Thing After Another."

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Letters to the Editor: *Political Questions in Book Reviewing*

"Obviously Partisan"

SIR:—Miss Katherine Wilson makes two main points: first, that reviews in the *SRL* are controversial—that is, that they express obviously personal opinions; and second, that both the books reviewed and the reviewers reflect a predominantly liberal or radical bias.

The first point is the more important. For, to criticize the expression of personal opinions in book reviewing is to criticize not only the traditions of the *SRL*, but "the fundamental principles and traditions of the American system" of reviewing, as well. European writers, except in the avowedly partisan Reviews, have generally attempted to preserve a certain objectivity. Many American readers who desire objectivity—that is, the suppression of personal opinions—subscribe to Reviews such as the *London Times Literary Supplement*. But the *SRL*, following the American tradition, has always encouraged the expression of opinion in its pages. Its justification, perhaps, is that it is following the American tradition. But it is also making its reviews more vital, more democratic, and more honest:—more vital, because difference of opinion is the source of all living literature and thought; more democratic, because democracy is founded on the free expression of opinion; and more honest, because all criticism implies opinion, and opinions openly avowed are honest, while opinions disguised as statements of fact are dishonest.

But even if free statements of opinion are in the best American tradition, undue emphasis on one brand of opinion is not. The *SRL* is accused of employing a majority of liberal and radical reviewers. In part, this is true. But, if the *Review* is to employ the best writers available, it must follow this apparently unfair policy. For the majority of good writers in this, as in every age, are liberal; just as the majority of good lawyers in every age are conservative. Possession is nine tenths of the law, but dispossession is nine tenths of literature. Most writers are dissatisfied with things as they are, or they would not be writers.

Even so, a good number of conservative reviews have appeared in the *SRL*. But they have not advertised themselves as such, and so have passed unnoticed. The radical is apt to announce his prejudices loudly; the liberal to admit his frankly; but the conservative is apt to say nothing about his bias, and often to believe sincerely that he has none. He only is objective. Therefore obviously partisan reviews are deplorable, and should not be printed in the *SRL*.

FREDERIC I. CARPENTER.

Belmont, Mass.

Disinterested Integrity

SIR:—Count me with the lady from Berkeley who likes her book reviews straight. No one enjoys controversial political writing more than I, but when a book is under consideration, even one dealing with politics and economics, I wish to learn something about the book and not the opinions of the reviewer respecting the More Abundant Life.

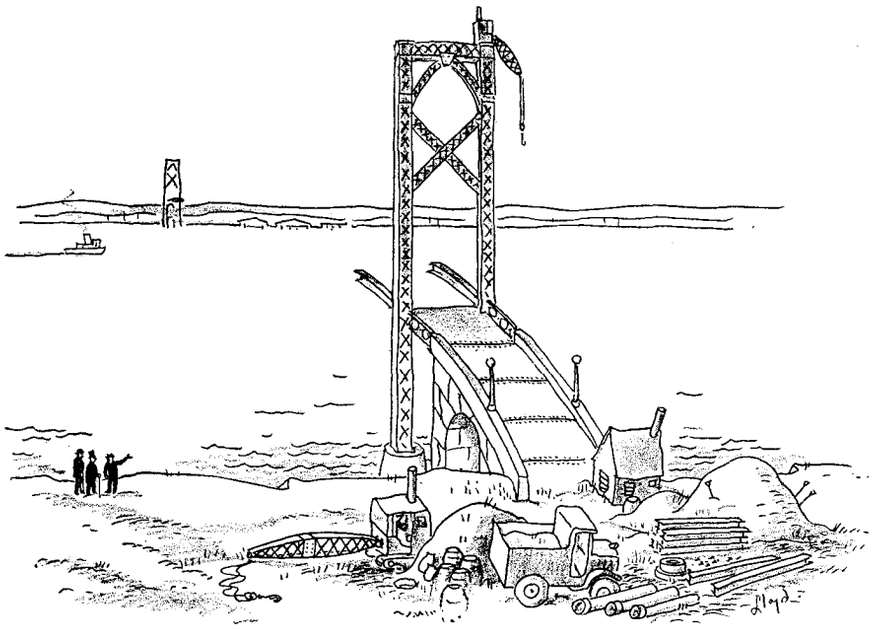
Conceivably an interesting contribution could be written thus:

> I have been asked to review the new biography of Andrew Jackson by James H. Smithers. Since this opus is quite obviously an absurd and ill-considered treatise intended for campaign effect, I shall dismiss it forthwith and give you instead of a review an essay on Jacksonian democracy.

At least that would be candid. The editors of *The Saturday Review* cannot, of course, be too brutally rigid with their reviewers, but for the duration of the campaign they might maintain a department for the discussion of political and economic topics by contributors who have good, rousing controversial opinions burning for expression. I should like such a department. It would relieve pressure, provide good reading, and make easier the maintenance of the disinterested integrity of reviewing that has always distinguished this journal.

V. V. MCNITT.

New York City.



"THEY'VE ALL TRANSFERRED TO THE FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT."

Let's Have More Politics

SIR:—The criticism concerning the alleged "preponderance of reviews of so-called 'liberal' and radical books" has, I believe, been adequately answered in the editors' reply to Miss Wilson's letter. I have found no justification for such a contention.

After a careful perusal of her letter, I am still in doubt as to what kind of books Miss Wilson would like to have reviewed. Does she mean that books of fiction, literary criticism, the arts, and natural science alone have a place in the *SRL*? The inconsistency involved in this opinion is admirably and amusingly displayed by the fact that her single example of "political bias" in a review was Elmer Davis's review of a *novel*, Phyllis Bentley's "Freedom, Farewell." Let Miss Wilson consider for a moment whether it is possible to write a politically unbiased review of such *novels* as Lewis's "It Can't Happen Here" or Steinbeck's "In Dubious Battle." I think she will find her position untenable.

By all means, "in this day of ferment and confusion," let us have more and more books and reviews on political and controversial subjects—for humanity's sake.

HARRY SILLER.

New York City.

Republican Loses One Buck

SIR:—It was with satisfaction that I read Miss Wilson's letter to you, relative to politics and political partisanship intruding in reviews. I say with "satisfaction" because I have longed to write you on the same platform myself. Miss Wilson has covered the ground so thoroughly, and so much better than I ever could, that I can add only Amen to her letter.

It was astounding, to me, that Mr. Davis's review of Phyllis Bentley's "Freedom, Farewell" was printed in a magazine devoted to literary criticism. It was a vehicle, if ever I read one, for the reviewer to take a whack at the present administration. Happening to be a dyed in the wool Republican, I should have thought it a grand political article, but hardly a book review, had I seen it in the *Herald-Tribune*.

You, pardon me, do not answer Miss Wilson at all. You evade the issue completely. She does not say that political books should not be reviewed. Indeed not. She says why send a book purport-

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Letters to the Editor: *Political Questions in Book Reviewing*

ing to contain a reactionary point of view, to *The New Republic* for a review by one of its editors. The author has no more chance than the proverbial snowball for a fair review. And she does not say the reviewer should not express his own reaction to the book, she states that he should not use the review as a means for a discourse on his own deductions, as Mr. Davis did.

In all of Clifton Fadiman's reviews does he ever intrude his own political theories, or slam the administration? I should say not. He reviews BOOKS, and, Oh Boy, does he do a job as no other reviewer does it? Many a publisher echoes this sentiment, for they all know his erudition, and his fearless policy of "no log-rolling."

Since you believe in calling names right out in meeting, let me beg of you not to let the beloved *Saturday Review* go "I.M.P." on you. It would be a pity to lose its prestige as fast as has her column because she thrusts her political views down the throats of her readers, instead of doing Book Reviews, which is what the "Turn" was always so in demand for until its author went hay-wire on politics.

I'll bet you a buck you don't print this letter, in full, anyway. I hope you collect!

BARBARA COBB.

Hingham, Mass.

(Miss Cobb assumes, as Miss Katherine Wilson assumed, that the book which we sent for review to Mr. George Soule of The New Republic *was written from a "reactionary point of view." The book in question is "Our Enemy the State" by Albert Jay Nock. To call this book reactionary, or even conservative, is a highly debatable proposition, to say the least.* —The Editors.)

Overstated Assertion

SIR:—As has Miss Katherine Wilson, in her letter of the issue of March 28, so, too, have I been a subscriber to *The Saturday Review* since it was a magazine feature of the *New York Evening Post.* Likewise have I clung to my subscription during the past few years when it was a sacrifice to do so.

But I cannot share the perturbation she expresses over "the increasingly apparent trend toward the intrusion of political controversy and obvious political bias in virtually every department of the magazine."

To be frank, her statement is in itself precisely the attitude of mind she deplores in the magazine and actually is a decidedly overstated assertion. At least, so it seems to my mind.

I have been happy to see *The Saturday Review* take a more lively interest in the world of affairs, not that I wish to see it become a journal of current events, but I do enjoy especially reviews—and articles concerning controversial economic and sociological problems.

I read and enjoyed Mr. Davis's review of Miss Bentley's book. I have just carefully reread it, twice.

Now let's be fair. I will admit that Mr. Davis probably stepped on many tender toes. He may have interpolated an undue amount of his own prejudices and opinions in that review. That is largely a question of temperament as to how one would react to his statements. But I do submit that his—should one say, asides?—were so clearly put as being just that, that I fail to see how one should be outraged by his review.

Of course, it comes finally to a point of view. Miss Wilson has clearly been distressed by some of the challenges flung toward "the fundamental principles of the American system of government," while the writer has rejoiced in them—not blindly we hope—but with the abiding conviction that there is much rottenness parading under high-sounding euphemisms, along with much that is fine and true, and let's be not afraid to look at them for what they are. If we can by divine grace see straight!

S. H. REESOR.

Chicago, Ill.

Stretch of Imagination

SIR:—In your italicized reply to Katherine Wilson's complaint in your March 28th issue, you state: *"The Saturday Review exists to review books."* By what stretch of the imagination can the last paragraph of Alfred Bingham's review of "The Lost Generation" (in the same issue) be included in such a category?

We do not ask that reviewers be "wholly without opinions of their own," but are we not entitled to a greater degree of objectivity than would be permitted in present-day Germany or Italy, for instance, in the discussion of an anti-regime treatise?

If reviewers cannot refrain from airing their personal convictions in discussing books on controversial subjects, the reader should at least be helped toward a decision as to whether or not the book merits an expenditure of $2.50, rather than being forced to listen to a mere exposition of the reviewer's own pet ideas.

IRVING N. FISHER.

Woodbridge, Conn.

Fools, Wolves, Honest Men

SIR:—If Miss Wilson, apparently a conservative in politics and economics, thinks that too many liberal reviewers have been writing for the *SRL* recently, let me say that I who am by no means a conservative can remember in recent months a number of reviews that seemed to me to have a tone decidedly too reactionary to be trustworthy. Yet I would not have the editors exclude such writers but rather let us have them in equal numbers with the liberals so that our personal bias may not be fed too richly.

There is really no such thing as an entirely unprejudiced reviewer. Let each writer honestly interpret the book under consideration with the point of view which he personally espouses. In one of his fascinating lectures on Fascism, Professor Gaetano Salvemini divides speakers into three classes. "First, there are those who think they are unbiased but really are not. These are the fools! Second, those who say they are unbiased but know they are not. These are the wolves in sheep's clothing! Third, those who know that they are prejudiced and warn the audience at the outset. These are the honest men!" If the editors continue to apply this principle in their selection of reviewers, they will perhaps offend a small number of readers but will certainly please the majority.

GEORGE MCCRACKEN.

Otterbein College,
Westerville, Ohio.

Art as Propaganda

SIR:—As a subscriber to the *Review* of a number of years' standing, I should like to confess to the same experience during the last two years as that described by Miss Katherine Wilson. Quite frankly, if it were not for Mr. Morley's chatty, pleasant, and controversy-free columns and my wife's interest in the Crostics, I should discontinue my subscription. My reason for this discontinuance would not be any political or economic convictions I may hold, but simply boredom with art-as-propaganda reviewers who feel it their duty to civilization to stuff every utterance with such phrases as "exploited classes" and "vested interests." I do not wish to deny the genuine problems indicated by such phrases; but reviewers of recent works dealing with these problems, or works only very remotely concerned with them, seem to force the conviction that extreme devotion to a cause completely atrophies both the sense of humor and the critical acumen.

I sincerely sympathize with the position of the editors of a literary review during a period when people who read and write are preponderantly interested in immediately practical issues. Certainly, if books appear in great numbers on economics and politics, it is up to you to review them. I honestly feel, however, that you do give undue emphasis, through length of the review and prominence of location in the magazine, to works dealing with these subjects—even though they may be works of decidedly minor importance. It would take a Newton or a Kant to "rate" one of the first six pages of the *Review* with a book on physics or philosophy.

In *re* your partisanship—I am sure that the proverbially impartial man from Mars would suspect you of radical bias; but I also believe that that suspicion would in a great part spring from the fact that persons with leftward leanings seem amazingly fecund in published brain-children; and you very wisely have them reviewed by persons whose interests run to some degree in the same channels as those of the writers.

JOHN L. MOTHERSHEAD, JR.

Palo Alto, Cal.

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Pinchot

AYN RAND

Author of "We the Living" and also of the recent play, "Night of January 16."

Days of Tumult

WE THE LIVING. By Ayn Rand. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by IRINA SKARIATINA

THE scene of this novel is laid in Petrograd in 1922 during the period of the NEP when Lenin temporarily revived private trade. Only a few trainloads of food a day stood between millions of people and starvation.

> There were no schedules, no timetables. No one knew when a train would leave or arrive. Travelers . . . waited for hours, for days . . . or a week. The littered floors of the waiting rooms smelt like their bodies; they put their bundles on the floor, and their bodies on the bundles, and slept. They munched patiently dry crusts of bread and sunflower seeds; they did not undress for weeks.

The Civil War had just come to an end. The Bolsheviks had achieved power.

This is the period, the most chaotic in Russia's history, which Ayn Rand has chosen for her novel concerning the fate and fortunes of the Argounov family, former textile manufacturers, and their relatives, the Dunaevs who were fur traders. All were staunch representatives of the fast dwindling middle class. Kira Argounova, younger of two daughters, really wanted to do something with her life. To be an engineer, to build; that was her ambition.

But families like the Argounovs too often fell under the label "counter-revolutionary," usually were that, in fact, and Kira found herself constantly thwarted in her attempts to break through the maze of politics that came seeping into everything she wanted to do. The new freedom did not yet embrace all classes.

At the university there was the Party interfering with her right to an education as an individual, representative of the bourgeoisie, unless she could conform to the ideals laid down by the new state. There also was Andrei Taganov, Red hero of the Civil War and now district member of the G.P.U., who fell in love with her. But it was to Leo Kovalensky, son of a Czarist Admiral, that Kira gave her affections; she went to live with him after he was caught trying to escape from Russia as a counter-revolutionary. "Had they got him two months ago it would've been the firing squad and no questions asked," his captor told her when she sought his release from prison. But Russia was changing. Leo was discharged in a few days for lack of evidence against him.

All through this book live the various characters of the Revolution. Ardent Communists, discouraged, because they believed that under NEP all was lost which they and their comrades had fought and died for; members of the middle class hating the lives they were forced to live, and refusing to conform to Party principles; "charlatans" of private profit, the new menace to socialism; Victor Dunaev, Kira's first cousin, who joined the Party while the others of his family hoped for its destruction and clung to the elements of opposition. But always there was Andrei Taganov, defender of the Revolution and all it held for the future of Russia.

Kira's lover Leo was stricken with tuberculosis. He must go to the Crimea in order to get well. But how? The hospitals were full, there were long waiting lists. So in order to obtain the necessary funds for Leo's "vacation," Kira gave herself to Andrei who believed she loved him as he did her.

Leo returned cured, determined to fight the Bolshevik Government to the end. He fell in with speculators who reached toward powerful figures in the government with their offers of graft, became rich under NEP, but was later exposed by Andrei as a profiteer who was a menace to the country.

It would not be fair to reveal what happens to all the characters who pass through the pages of this book. Needless to say the Revolution did strange things to them as it did to everybody in those days. All who lived in Petrograd during this period can testify to that. It is not a pleasant tale, this "We the Living." There is scarcely a character who does not reveal some form of weakness. But it was a far from pleasant period when everyone was fighting desperately for the mere right to exist. This reviewer who lived through those times closed the book with the thought "Thank God that period for my people has passed." But Ayn Rand has preserved in her pages a graphic story of what could happen and often did happen in Russia in 1922.

Irina Skariatina is the author of "A World Can End," "First to Go Back," and "New Worlds for Old," all of them chronicles of changing Russia.

Nancy Hale's Stories

THE EARLIEST DREAMS. By Nancy Hale. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

MISS HALE has written two novels but I think her forte is decidedly the short story. I read only one of her novels, "The Young Die Good," and I liked it only fairly well. The fifteen stories in the present volume are in an entirely different category. In fact, several of them are masterly.

Some of these stories have already been praised by critics. One, at least, "made" one collection of the best stories of the year. Three of the best, "No One My Grief Can Tell," "Mid Summer," and "To the Invader," Miss Hale has wisely put first in her book. "For Art's Sake," "Love Is Not Love," "The Artist, As an Old Man," and "The Rider Was Lost" seem to me just about first rate. That makes seven out of fifteen, and none of the others is commonplace.

For instance, "Mariana." Well as it is handled, it goes on for too long. For once, I think, Miss Hale is carried away by the delight of writing,—yes, delight, for that can reside to the artist even in treating the most harrowing situation. Miss Hale *is* an artist, just as she is the daughter of an artist in another medium. She knows about painting and painters—just as she knows about Southerners and huntsmen. Naturally, with a mind sometimes almost uncannily alert, she knows about her own sex. But she also can portray contrasted types of men with insight. The men most women put into their stories are unrecognizable to most men. But as different kinds as the groom in "Midsummer," and Mr. Britton, and Abel Crane, and Cathcart James are thoroughly convincing when presented by Miss Hale. And I like the adroitness of her workmanship and

NANCY HALE

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the naturalness of her dialogue. She very rarely fumbles.

There is, besides situation—almost always building to tragedy—an envelope of what I can only call poetry to some of the stories. It is most evident, of course, in the extraordinary first story of the young wife obsessed by her maternity and trying to combat it. Obviously it is in the delicate description of the title-story. "The Earliest Dreams." It is certainly in "Mariana." But it is pervasive in the book—and you cannot capture sunlight, though you may lay your hand on a beam of it as it crosses the floor, and feel your hand warmed thereby.

These stories are not concocted—none of them—though some are fabric of the imagination and some drawn from experience. They are, from whichever source they come, stories that have grown in the heart as well as the mind. Miss Hale can even reach back into a past long before she was born or thought of and, in "The Blue Muslin Sepulchre," combine the Age of Decorum with the horror of Brieux. And she can title a story of wholly modern rejected love, and instinctive reaction against the formerly beloved, after the Middle Ages and Rossetti, "The Waxen Man"—though the psychological upheaval takes place at a prize-fight.

This book with the queer bulldog-nose stamped on its jacket is going up on the shelf of the books of short stories I set most store by. These are stories I can reread. Which reminds me that I ought really to be savagely critical of Miss Hale. For at her best she can be so startlingly good that one trembles lest ill-advised praise do her harm. Well, the cat's out of the bag, anyway!

Peasant Life

THERE IS MY HEART. By Peter Neagoe. New York: Coward McCann. 1936. $2.50.

MR. NEAGOE'S novels all have distinction. He writes of peasant life in the east of Europe, and in this book of the Transylvania region where two races mingle without mixing on the soil. His hero is a small boy ambitious to make something of himself, who starts on a journey to America which proves to be a series of adventures among his own people. The novel has not much plot but a great deal of good characterization, with passages that are sheer idyll and a rough natural humor that goes beneath the surface into the peasant soil itself. Here is a good example of the contribution which our immigrants of Continental stocks are beginning to make to literature in English. One can imagine no more interesting contrast than such a study as this of the deep simplicity of European peasant life with the immigrant's existence in the shifts and relative superficialities of an American experience. It would seem probable that Mr. Neagoe intends to give us both.

Practical Prophets

THE PROPHETS OF ISRAEL. By Edith Hamilton. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1936. $3.

Reviewed by KIRSOPP LAKE

MISS EDITH HAMILTON needs no introduction to the public which reads good books about history. As a rule such books are sloppy fiction masquerading as psychology. Hers are delightful exceptions, and the "Prophets of Israel" contains only one serious misstatement: the author pretends that she is not learned in the history of the criticism of the Old Testament. That is obviously untrue, for she has picked her way through all the traps with a certainty impossible to the uninitiated, and has succeeded in being accurate without being pedantic.

From "The Prophets of Israel."

The Prophets are the great contribution of the pre-Christian Semitic world to the history of religion. They had, perhaps, predecessors in Egypt and in Babylon, but even if this be true the predecessors were not very successful. Paraphrasing the prophetic message in modern English, it is that God is not interested in worship; sacrifices, psalms, and feast days are useless to men and abhorrent to God; what God asks for is that men should behave decently to one another. This message came suddenly. Elijah and Elisha know nothing about it. Amos and Hosea, a century later, know nothing else.

The prophetic movement was partially accepted by two kings, Hezekiah and Josiah, but both times by way of compromise—the prophets said, "No sacrifices," so Josiah said, "Except in Jerusalem." That was better than nothing, especially since the law formulated to establish this compromise included much of the ethical teaching of Jeremiah. But the great triumph of the prophets was that they rescued Judah from the Captivity. The ten tribes of Israel went into exile and never returned. Judah came back. Why? The answer is that Israel rejected Amos and Hosea, but Judah in Jerusalem listened to Isaiah and Jeremiah and by the waters of Babylon Ezekiel inspired their thoughts.

Ezekiel possibly receives a little less than justice from Miss Hamilton. She may be right, but I feel that she has put too much emphasis on the later chapters and too little on the earlier ones. Ezekiel xviii always seems to me one of the classical sources for the spirit of Judaism. The prophet emphasizes two things—self-responsibility and repentance. "What mean ye that ye use this proverb in Israel, 'the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge' . . . the soul that sinneth *it* shall die, the son shall not perish for the sins of his father." That is to say, each man is responsible for his own life. Heredity is no excuse. Yet a critic of Ezekiel might say, "That is not true: history and biology conspire to assert that we are what our fathers made us." Which is right, the prophet or the critic? The answer is, as usual, that both are. Life would be easier if it were a choice between sharply cut alternatives. But it is not: it is a balance of contrasted and conflicting planes, each seeming to be the antithesis of the other but proving to be its complement.

Ezekiel also taught the validity of repentance. "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness . . . he shall save his soul alive." That is a fundamental doctrine of Judaism and of Jesus. Whether it is true or not, it is hard to say. In practical life it is obviously not true. The man who has been idle and criminal all his life cannot repent and go back by a sudden jump to industry and virtue. Even if he repent, society does not forgive. Nevertheless, *sub specie æternitatis* direction is more important than position. Is it possible that it takes two to work out the solution? What should we make of the parable of the Prodigal Son if the father had insisted that the boy must first expiate his offense? Once more, it is not a choice between clear alternatives. The trouble is that so few people see both sides, but try to force through the acceptance of that which they do see.

In some *obiter dicta* Miss Hamilton shows that she regards Christianity as the true heir to the prophets of Israel. In one sense I agree. Jesus certainly belongs in the succession of the prophets. His attitude to the Law is, *mutatis mutandis,* what theirs was to worship. The religion of the future will certainly also continue the succession, for the message of the prophets is not yet accepted and it will live until it is. But Christianity is not only Jewish but Greek. The Jews moralized God and then sterilized their work by strangling the God of the prophets in the network of the Law. The Christians accepted the rationalized God of the Greeks, but neutralized their acceptance by turning into mythology the efforts of the philosophers to state the problems of the infinite and the immaterial in the language of the finite and the concrete.

Kirsopp Lake is professor of history and ecclesiastical history at Harvard University. One of the foremost theologians in the country, he is the author of a large number of books in the religious field.

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

For Ladies Only

HOW pleasant for us Moderns, with our complacent superiority, to look back at some of the old-fashioned best-sellers; particularly (as Mrs. Gerould was remarking in this Review last week) those written for the excitement of women. Mrs. Gerould mentioned, among others, Ouida, Miss Braddon, The Duchess, Marie Corelli. When we examine their works we condescend with amusement. Their creaking psychology; their heroines like bisque statuettes; their formulated coincidence; their agonized to-do over nodes of conscience that wouldn't bother our own chromium streamline ethics. Tosh, we cry, how could any grown person take such things seriously? Isn't it encouraging to think what progress our technique has made since then!

There's a novel in this antiquated genre that is perhaps my favorite of all I've ever read. To retell it in bare plot, without the artful Platonic shimmer which tenderly disguises it, is plainly unfair. But sooner or later someone will render it down for picture-blubber, so why shouldn't I throw the first harpoon? The important thing to note (though I'm too bashful to go into full detail) is how marvellously this book is adapted to the feminine reader; how with endless aesthetic pruritus it keeps the dames on edge. Most male readers will be blown away by gusts of laughter; but the girls . . . dear me . . . Gather round, ladies, for a whiff of ambergris.

First of all, the hero. What a man. He makes me think of Ouida's Oxford oarsman in the Eights:—"all rowed fast, but none so fast as he." He is Byron and Shelley, d'Annunzio and Dr. Traprock rolled into one. Tall, slender, with gleaming black hair, full curly lips, he is a pursuer of ecstasy. "Women surrender to him without condition." He's a poet and novelist, but he doesn't even have to carry his own MSS after he's written them. He has a man-servant who picks up the sheets as Milord tosses them on the floor, and totes them back from Italy in a bag. Yes, though English (he has a noble estate down in Dorset) he prefers to write in a palazzo in Lucca. His wife is a grand person but she doesn't seem to give him what he needs. Just what that is, nobody knows. Does he get it in the story? That would be telling you.

Milord (he's both Baron and Viscount) will be forgiven (by his lady readers) some of his zigzags for the sorrows of his nonage. His mother, evidently intelligent, eloped from his father. The child was brought back, but he was the cadet and for a long time he wasn't even allowed to attend the annual religious vobiscum held at the family sepulchre on the heir's birthday. He was a problem child. When his emotions were beyond boyish expression, "he turned on the world as a wild thing." He rode dangerous horses, climbed down dizzy cliffs, leaped from balcony to balcony along the front of the big house. It was the family sepulchre that really made a Poet out of him. The Milords were all buried in a great vault in the slope of a hill, where the coffins of their ancestors could be seen on shelves through an open grille. The older brother sneakingly locked the boy in there one night. Instead of being frightened he went into a Shelleyan hiatus and got his first idea of Death as the supreme achievement.

The older brother, the original heir, was a coward and an amoeba. Not even Eton and cub-hunting could make much out of him; but he is conveniently deleted from the story. A better influence on the young poet was old Mr. Hardy, the parson, his tutor. If Milord had taken to heart Mr. Hardy's remarks about the virtues of Goldsmith's writing, it would have been well.

But all that is mere prologue. The real doings come 21 years later. Milord, now a famous and baffling Author, is coming back from Italy. His beautiful writing is stuck for the moment, and he is homesick for the family sepulchre. Besides, there's got to be a check-up with his wife's trustees who keep the estate going. Milady has been patiently at home, managing the property and their child. She's half-American, and rich: daughter of a tycoon of Heavy Industries. When Milord married her he was having a bad time: "newspapers and women gave him no peace." Milady has sacrificed everything for him, and he's grateful; he loves her still, he really does, but she gives him no kick. And even when he's home he spends all his time in a cottage in the woods, writing. This bothers Milady, as it naturally would, and she tells Dr. George Hardy about it. Dr. George (son of the old parson and a boyhood playmate of Milord) is a good solid fellow with no hankering for women; the kind of chap one confides in. It would embarrass me to quote some of the things Milady tells him, but Dr. George's clinical eye notes that her finger-nails are dry and brittle; a bad sign. (I can see a hundred thousand ladies, reading this book, looking anxiously at their nails.)

Milord is brittle too; a devil of a fellow. "To be searched by him is like being searched by a god." But he's a great Poet and much must be forgiven. Milady is not meanly jealous: she knows that women are a stimulus to his art. Poor old celibate George, not pretending to understand such matters, supposes that art has nothing to do with morals, and Milord must have "Dionysiac release, Aristotelean purging."

Dionysus and Aristotle are on the way, in the person of Mary, aged 18. She is a former pupil of Dr. George's invalid sister. She arrives on visit near-by, squired by a tedious father and a pinkish-blond athlete fiancé. Mary is a sweetheart: not merely pretty but enchantingly beautiful: a simple child raised on books by Frances Ridley Havergal and now just beginning to be aware of poetry.

Any experienced female reader has got the idea already. Dr. George is sent to meet Mary at the train. His long spiritual fidelity to a previous dead love puffs away. As soon as he sees Mary he is "pierced by an emotion so sweet, so painful, so charged with wild stabbing remembrance." Now you know about George.

Mary and her father stay at a seaside hotel. Her fiancé Peter, the crass cricketer, is their guest. The father, whose means are meagre, wants her to marry this stout fellow, but girlish hunch tells her that Peter isn't really her pigeon. When, after dancing, he kisses her a bit vehemently ("with blind, plunging head" as a matter of fact) she's annoyed. After one of their squabbles she visits a bookshop to look for something by Milord, who is the great legend of the town. Perhaps I should quote one of his poems which pleased Mary:—

Last night I flew into the tree of death;
Sudden an outer wind did me sustain;
And I, from feathered poppet on its swing,
Wrapt in my element, was bird again.

And there at the bookstall, while standing with her tawny hair brightened by sunshine and looking at Hazlitt's *Liber Amoris,* she is discountenanced by a dark figure in the gloom of the doorway, staring at her. His "lustrous eyes were deeply caverned by the brow," he was "beauty frustrate but inwardly burning."

Here's where the lady reader better quit. If she gets beyond here she's done for.

Meanwhile the prayers of the congregation are asked for Dr. George. He is hard hit—and a man of 37, too! He tries to ossify his obsession with Mary's beauty by thinking, churlish anatomist, of the commonplace skeleton under such soft

(*Continued on next page*)

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Charles Morgan and the Modern Temper

(*Continued from page* 4)

less love—a love worth the sacrifice of his place in the world, deserving of such steadfast fidelity as he gives to his art and to his lifelong adoration of death. Mary Leward first captivates his fancy when she is a very young girl, exquisitely lovely, wholly innocent. She flutters helplessly about him, moth to candle. He means to devour her as casually as he has devoured many another morsel of feminine flesh, but chance and an inexplicable revulsion get in his way. Presently circumstances make her the bride of Sparkenbroke's best friend, George Hardy, a Dorset neighbor and country physician who loves her with mature singleness. She loves her husband—in a way; but she loves Sparkenbroke, too, as Sparkenbroke well knows, and when chance throws the two into propinquity once more she is still as helpless as ever. Fully meaning to take her at his convenience, he can renounce neither his cynicism nor his inexplicable idealism long enough to decide in what mood or with what implication he shall take her. He can neither commit himself to a serious love nor content himself with one more meaningless liaison; and still less can he leave Mary in peace to her own loyalties.

The upshot is that the pair can only talk, temporize, torture themselves, struggle for the initiative to commit adultery or the fortitude to forego it, revile themselves at one moment for not simply taking what they want and the next moment for wanting it, and understand in their hearts that whatever they do must be wrong as a solution and intolerable in its consequences. For the better part of five hundred pages they sit on grassy banks in Dorset and on divans and marble benches in Lucca, talking some of the most eloquent talk ever imagined in this world—half of it on the undying question What is Art? and the other half on the personal problem of whether they shall commit adultery and, if so, with how much present conviction and what future intention. And that is the book.

For they never do anything about it. They are in Mr. Morgan's favorite situation: that of two persons who somehow can neither command the simultaneous initiative to sin nor yet afford the cost of virtue. And in this situation he keeps them inexorably until the night on which the poet-peer dies in a spasm of angina pectoris in the tomb where at twelve he fell in love with death. It is the night on which the pair would at last have fled to Italy together. Or would they? Perhaps, if they had actually met that night, they would suddenly have discovered that what the poet principally wanted was the sublimation of some more exquisite talk into another poem, and that what Mary fundamentally needed was to keep her engagements and her vows.

In any event the poetic justice of the rendezvous with death lights no lamp and rings no bell. You cannot call the outcome tragic: it is what Sparkenbroke waits for, believes in as the supreme boon, and desires above all things—especially above life. And, anyway, is not tragedy the mutilation of the strong? What enthralls Mr. Morgan, together with most of his post-war contemporaries, is of course the mutilation of the weak, the death of the moribund. But the chief reason why Sparkenbroke's end achieves the effect of neither destiny nor anti-climax is, I think, that it takes life to make death count, whether as fulfilment or as doom. And the godlike Sparkenbroke, ostensibly living and being irresistible to women, is but a gesturing skeleton transiently clothed in flesh—a corpse *manqué*.

The most amazing fact about Mr. Morgan, a partial explanation of his strange power, and one reason why "Sparkenbroke" is likely to hold and enlarge the great audience won by "The Fountain," is his unusual richness in some ancillary and marginal qualities which flatly deny his central purport by ministering to the lovers of life. His pages are, for instance, starred with luminous incidental sayings, just and penetrating *aperçus* about life, learning, art, men, women, love. He is never one of those writers whom his Dr. George Hardy calls the sneerers, and he condescends to no crackling smartness. He writes—and this is itself a modern miracle—in prose, in syntax, actually in sentences, with an unhurrying personal rhythm as distinct as Meredith's and of the utmost flexibility.

He has, and uses to the full, the power to breathe a vital animation into the things, the objects, the scenes among which his personæ drift as beings benumbed or drugged. When Mary Hardy, in a church at Lucca, tries dutifully to pray against her heart and her flesh, we feel her as an evanescence without meaning, but we also feel the church as charged with meaning and with eternity. A statue of antiquity is a being with the innate power of future self-incarnation. Sparkenbroke's pencil is more alive than the man who holds it. The parts are vital, though the whole for which they exist be but one prolonged invocation to death—eloquent, just, and mighty death if you gauge him by the splendor of words in which he is tricked out.

The publishers tell us that in "Sparkenbroke" Mr. Morgan brings to a close a phase of his work as novelist which he began with "Portrait in a Mirror" (1929) and extended in "The Fountain" (1932). The interesting question is, of course, whether in the implied next phase his work is still to be polarized around the overcivilized modern intelligence—whether he will continue to take it seriously and at its own valuation, with all its indecision, its self-admiration and self-pity, its tireless talent for distributing the attributes of death piecemeal through every department of living. Some of Mr. Morgan's incidental qualities encourage a hope that he may yet escape the charnel-house in which the modern temper is at home. Escape it he must if he is to be much more than a fashionable novelist who writes like an archangel. Thus far, he has done more than most to turn the novel over to the custody of specialized, sophisticated, rootless, disillusioned folk—the folk who, in greater and greater numbers, become eager slaves to current intellectual fashions along with other prevalent forms of death, and who know not the taste of the water of life.

Wilson Follett is the author of several books of criticism, among them "The Modern Novel" and "The Second Twenty-Eight Years: a Note on Stephen Crane." His novel, "No More Sea," was published two years ago.

The Bowling Green

(*Continued from preceding page*)

contour. He takes her to visit Milord Place, the poet's vast chateau which is open to sightseers on Saturdays. She prefers to stroll off in the woods, and he is too prim to go with her. And there, lying under an ash tree, bronzed with Italian sun but his "inner arm as brilliant as white opal," is the same fascinating man from the bookshop. Unlike every other woman present, Mary has no idea who it is.

They have themselves a time. He dazzles her with brilliant and taunting conversation, very Balliol in tone. He recites poetry (Milord's, as it happens), drinks brook-water from her cupped palms, asks her what she does with her evenings. When his lips touch her hands it seems "to lay feathered wings on her breasts." At just the right moment he darts away from her into the underbrush. He is "revitalized" and sits down at once to exfoliate verses, until the man-servant tells him he's got to dine at the Big House to talk revenue with Milady's trustees. (In matters of income the Heavy Tycoon is the residuum.)

They meet again at a band-concert on the marine parade. After Milord has commandeered a chair for her, and ordered the musicians to play her favorite tune (Schumann's Romance) she suddenly guesses who he is. This is Milord in Person! To gentle this shock he writes an extempore poem on her program, and tells her she is beautiful.

By this time there is only one thing that any normal lady reader wants to know; but she'll have to hang exquisitely on tenterhooks for several hundred pages.

Of course Peter the cricketer is clean bowled by these googlies. Mary breaks her engagement, and flies to Dr. George for advice. George and his family invite her to stay at the Rectory.

Meanwhile Milord's revitalization is busy. After writing Mary a very cunning letter (how it contrasts with a poor crude note from Peter) he finds his vein renewed. In a brooding visit to the sepulchre he feels "the assurance of poetry high

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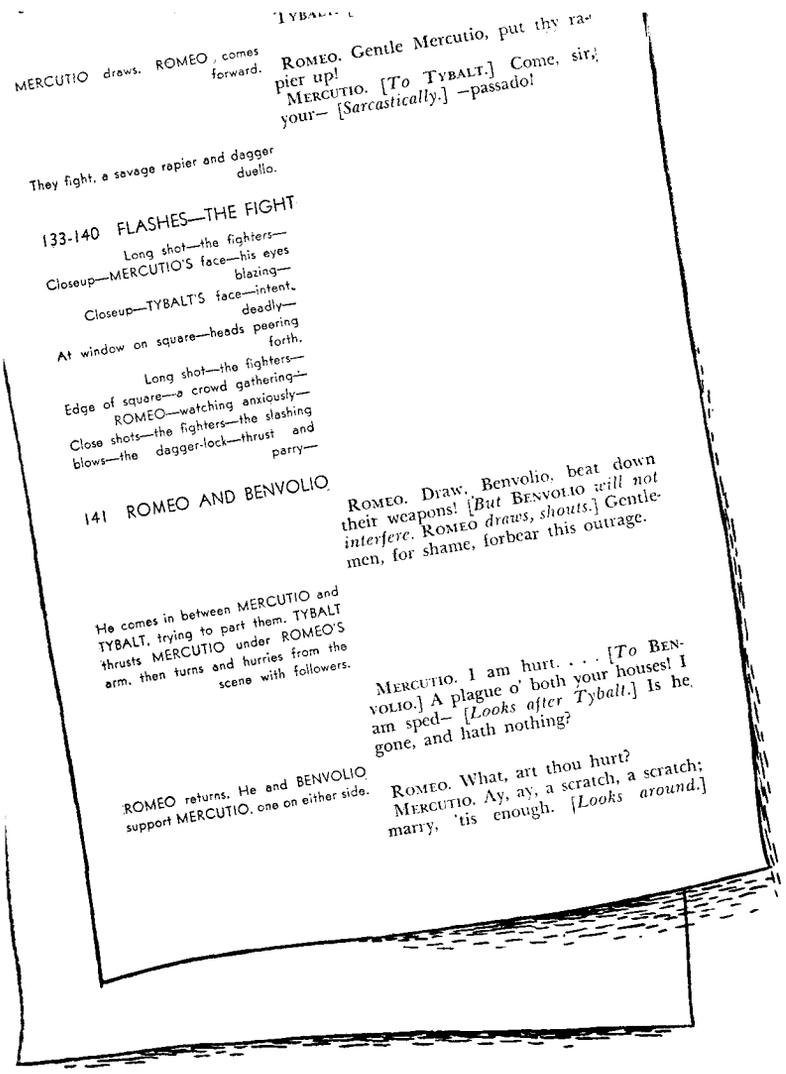
MERCUTIO draws. ROMEO comes forward.
ROMEO. Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up!
MERCUTIO. [To TYBALT.] Come, sir, your— [Sarcastically.] —passado!
They fight, a savage rapier and dagger duello.
133-140 FLASHES—THE FIGHT
Long shot—the fighters—
Closeup—MERCUTIO'S face—his eyes blazing—
Closeup—TYBALT'S face—intent, deadly—
At window on square—heads peering forth.
Long shot—the fighters—
Edge of square—a crowd gathering—
ROMEO—watching anxiously—
Close shots—the fighters—the slashing blows—the dagger-lock—thrust and parry—
141 ROMEO AND BENVOLIO
ROMEO. Draw, Benvolio, beat down their weapons! [But BENVOLIO will not interfere. ROMEO draws, shouts.] Gentlemen, for shame, forbear this outrage.
He comes in between MERCUTIO and TYBALT, trying to part them. TYBALT thrusts MERCUTIO under ROMEO'S arm, then turns and hurries from the scene with followers.
MERCUTIO. I am hurt. . . . [To BENVOLIO.] A plague o' both your houses! I am sped— [Looks after Tybalt.] Is he gone, and hath nothing?
ROMEO returns. He and BENVOLIO support MERCUTIO, one on either side.
ROMEO. What, art thou hurt?
MERCUTIO. Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch; marry, 'tis enough. [Looks around.]

Would Shakespeare have written this "Shooting Script" for Romeo and Juliet?

IT was prepared for the actors, directors and others concerned in the production of the motion picture version of Shakespeare's great play, produced by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, with Norma Shearer as Juliet, Leslie Howard as Romeo, and John Barrymore as Mercutio. Students of screen technique will find it one of the most interesting documents of our time; its value is heightened by the working notes, the comparison with the text of Shakespeare's play, and the other material included with it in the new RANDOM HOUSE publication which will appear *prior to* the release of the motion picture.

A MOTION PICTURE EDITION OF

ROMEO *and* JULIET

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•

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This notable screen production was made under the supervision of Irving Thalberg, who has contributed to the volume an essay, "Picturizing Romeo and Juliet." Included also are articles on the play by William Strunk, Jr., Professor of English at Cornell University; on the shooting script by Talbot Jennings; on the direction, by George Cukor; on the stage designs by Cedric Gibbons; on the costumes by Oliver Messel; and a guide to the study of the screen version, by Max J. Herzberg. It is profusely illustrated with photographs taken from the screen play.

• • •

The RANDOM HOUSE *edition of* Romeo and Juliet *will be published on Monday, May 4th. Your bookseller will be glad to reserve a copy for you. Large 12mo, cloth, 296 pages, $2.00.*

NORMA SHEARER *as Juliet*: LESLIE HOWARD *as Romeo*:

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Jews in America

by the Editors of FORTUNE

The Nazis have charged—partly as an excuse for their own terroristic regime—that even in America the Jews tend to dominate politics, industry, banking and the professions. The Editors of *Fortune* set out to discover the *facts*—and here they are. This book will be read and quoted by everyone who wants to answer, authoritatively, the anti-Jewish canard. An appendix lists and describes 20 Anti-Semitic organizations in the U. S. $1.00

Bury the Dead

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To a world aghast at the imminence of another great war, this twenty-three-year-old author addresses a fiery protest in a one-act drama that is as original in its conception as it is stunning in its impact. "He stands in imminent danger of growing into one of the most powerful dramatists of this land and time. It is a long time since I have seen a large audience so moved, so hotly convulsed, so deeply shaken . . . Here is not only a strong and beautiful plea, but also a stunning and beautiful play." —GABRIEL, *N. Y. American*. $1.

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by WILLIAM C. WHITE

The story of his political life, told for Americans . . . LENIN is the first of a series of distinguished new biographies of leaders of the Russian revolution, to be published within the year, by the author of *These Russians* and *Made in Russia*. $1.50.

RANDOM HOUSE

20 EAST 57 STREET, N. Y. C.

The Bowling Green

(Continued from page 14)

within him." He hastens back to pen and ink—and there, by gracious, is the girl herself, waiting for him. He tells her about the legend of Nicodemus (the topic of his current poem) and strokes her gently, but sends her away unkissed. (Patience, my dears.)

What fellows, those Victorian heroes! The potent Milord translates Catullus in spare moments; he writes poems and tosses them away (regardless of the autograph collectors); the "English and American advances" on the new book will be "over £6000"—of which my guess is at least ⅝ will be American. He is the Perfect Host at a ball or garden party—except for his guest Dr. George, who sees Milord and Mary together for a moment on the lawn. He sees Mary's "burning confessional glance" and forebodes the truth.

So George, the honest plod, tries to warn Mary; and avows his own passion. She promises she won't visit the lethal cottage again—but she does. She prepares herself (and the desiderating reader) for Worse Than Death. She strips, "stings her body with cold water," (hot is always scarce in an English rectory), puts on clean linen, and off to the spinneys—where they talk about literature. Still, we're creeping on a bit: Milord kisses her with "a rapture through which all time was flowing," and embraces her until "no consciousness remained to him but of a back's muscles under his hand,"—but then "a whiteness intervened upon his desire" and he desists.

Poor George visits Milord in his cottage, to beg him to be generous. Milord sprawls on the hearth in genial camaraderie, and reads George the MS. of the new poem—whose style is "dry, quiet, deceptively ingenuous." They discuss it, but finally the patient George makes his appeal. Evidently it has effect. Milord rouses up his man-servant and rushes off for Italy in the middle of the night—leaving Mary in a dither, and the whole sorority of readers also.

I abbreviate severely: it's not my purpose to tell you the whole story. But observe events conspire to keep the Womrath wenches in a gentle dew. Mary marries George, and happily; but George's invalid sister had always yearned to see Italy. They take her there on a trip. George has to return to his practice; Mary has anxieties (well she might) but must stay with her sister-in-law. The latter is taken ill at Pisa just as vivacious old Milord is driving by looking for an Andrea del Sarto. The sister, paralytic, is taken to Milord's palazzo in Lucca, where they are chaperoned by the Italian doctor. But Milord, driving home very late, finds Mary sitting up with a book. They learn that they still love each other. Another brink . . . but she gives him so good an idea for his Nicodemus legend that he sublimates with pen and paper.

The next day he has an attack of angina. They discuss at length (I'm too austere to quote) how far the actual physics of passion can convert "carnal separatism" into "indivisible reality." Some grand philandering palaver, but again it's all preposition and no conjunction.

Mary is pretty blue. Lying sleepless she gets a morbid notion that maybe Milord is dead. She goes through the courtyard in her nightgown, in the rain, and finds him as snug as can be in his literary and baronial bathrobe by the fire. He spreads her out on the hearth to dry, observes her critically ("whom the firelight and her frail lawn exposed") and carries her back to her own bed where she sleeps innocently on his arm. Arm and reader are both numb by the time there comes a knock. The ailing sister is dead.

Mary is surprised when Milord is peevish to her next day and makes vulgar allusions to Abelard, which fortunately she doesn't understand.

This is, Mary resolves, The End; but the reader sees a lot of pages yet to come and still hopes. George takes Mary back to England and they dig in peacefully. Milord, revitalized some more, goes on with his Tristan and Iseult book. His features grow sharp, his eye abnormally clear. The MS. finished he comes back to London for a ball Milady is giving at the town house. Again the Perfect Host but not the Perfect Husband. Milady, worrying about the estate, thinks the succession is not adequately sure . . . but I refrain (as did Milord).

At the town house Milord has seen again the old bird-cage that gave him his idea about the Feathered Poppet. It symbolizes for him final decision, and he goes back to Dorset—this time to Take Her Away in earnest. Mary and George have been happy with each other; poor George, because her nightgown is torn, has a penultimate glimpse of how beautiful she really is. She has a little flush up the back of her heels (good observation, that) and white planes behind her knees and a sheen on her flanks. But that last evening in the Old Rectory is pretty nervy: Mary's behavior is so odd they think perhaps she's going to have a baby. But the truth is she's due to meet Milord at the stone bridge at 10 p. m., and then ho for Lucca. It looks like Olive Oil for George.

And now I hear a million Womrath Wenches breathing fast and thick. What happens? I'm not going to tell you, and in a century of bathos you'd never guess. No, in justice to this incredible book I'll not divulge the dénouement—except to say it is literally that, a dénouement.

Yes, those oldtimers knew their stuff. We couldn't get away with anything like that now, could we? But wait a minute. The book was published this week. And when I said I thought it uproariously funny, some lady booksellers were quite angry.

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On April 6 We Published

THEODORE PARKER
Yankee Crusader

Enthusiastic

In presenting this biography to the booktrade we described it as follows: "This is the biography of a great American preacher, one of the great popular lecturers of his day who was also scholar, philosopher, abolitionist, social reformer and politician. Emerson thought him one of the three great men of his time. Here, then, is a biography of a militant reformer who was also a gallant, lovable Yankee. It is as well, a fascinating portrait gallery of the generation who made the Boston of their day the Athens of America. Mr. Commager is Professor of History at New York University and, in our opinion, one of the most promising of the younger writers of biography."

Cast Down

Orders received from the booktrade before publication totaled 659 copies.

Encouraged

The critics confirm our opinion of the book:

"Not more than once or twice in a blue moon does a biography appear which . . . achieves the purely narrative vigor . . . that makes this book so readable and so persuasive."—*Newton Arvin in The New Republic.*

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By HENRY STEELE COMMAGER

LITTLE, BROWN & COMPANY 34 Beacon Street, Boston

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Marx's Life and Thought

KARL MARX, The Story of His Life. By Franz Mehring. Translated by Edward Fitzgerald. New York: Covici-Friede. 1935. $5.

Reviewed by SIDNEY HOOK

THIS remarkable biography by a remarkable man has an interesting history. Written in Germany during the last year of the war by one of the few Marxists who had not struck his flag, it appeared in time to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of Karl Marx's birth. Its composition was hindered by the brutal officiousness of the military censorship which practically fought Mehring over every page. Upon its publication it was boycotted by the bureaucracy of the Social-Democratic Party whose war policy Mehring had criticized and whose heads he held responsible for the execution of Rosa Luxemburg, his collaborator on the section dealing with economic theory. None the less the book lit its own way among the intelligent members of German Social-Democracy and went through four large editions in as many years. Nor in the subsequent decade did it find much more favor with the political leaders of the Communist Party. In their eyes Mehring was a heretic and revisionist. His striking intellectual independence, his defence, on many points, of Bakunin and Lassalle against Marx and Engels, and the forthrightness with which he indicated where and when Marx erred, were regarded as serious shortcomings. From the time the Marx-Engels Institute was founded in Moscow down to very recently, the official Communist Party attitude toward Mehring was unsympathetic when not overtly hostile.

These external facts testify to the uncommon qualities of Mehring's biography—qualities which from the stylistic point of view can only be truly savored in the original. The most that can be said for the translation is that it is conscientious; knowledge of the intellectual climate of Marx's early career would have saved the translator from some curious and comical slips. The solid virtues of the book, however, appear on every page. The whole span of Marx's activity and thought is covered without any sacrifice of essential material or let-down of dramatic tempo in recounting the details of Marx's stormy life.

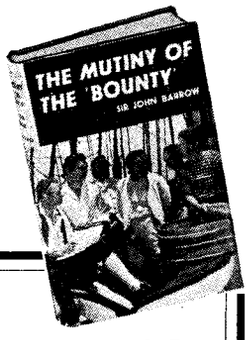
The picture of Marx which emerges from Mehring's study does not fit the traditional frames made for him by friends or opponents. He appears as a truly universal man thoroughly grounded in the great classical traditions of Greek philosophy and literature. His realistic analysis of the social conditions under which European culture flourished did not prevent him from enjoying it as his natural birthright. No narrow provincialism affected his judgments. At a time when the first stirrings of class consciousness manifested themselves in German lyrics and novels, despite his early German training and sympathy for the general content of some of this literature, Marx's preferences were for Shakespeare and Balzac. His natural piety seems to have been restricted to a love for the wines of the Rhine valley in which he grew up. He closed his preface to "Capital" with a line from Dante and wrote a pasquinade of Stirner in the metaphors of Cervantes. There was hardly a field of science of which he did not try to keep abreast, and he was among the first to grasp the epoch-making implications of the Darwinian theory. A remarkable combination of historical perspective and logical analysis enabled Marx to interpret facts where others only assembled them. His materialistic synthesis of English economic theory, French socialism, and German philosophy was no mere *Gedankenkonstruktion* but a series of practical judgments to guide the vanguard of the international working class in its daily struggles and major battles.

Particularly impressive in Mehring's account is the description of Marx as a practical revolutionary statesman. Whether he was discussing German liberalism, French radicalism, English trade-unionism, or Russian revolutionary agrarianism, Marx showed himself to be completely free from the twin evils of opportunism and sectarianism which —with the exception of a brief period when Lenin and Trotzky were at the helm in Russia—have bedevilled all the movements that have taken his name. In his own lifetime Marx disowned anarchism both of the Proudhonian and Bakuninist varieties as well as reformist socialism. It is not hard to predict what he would have said of the present generation of socialists and official communists who in most of the countries of Western Europe are supporting the war preparations of their national governments and backing the policy of sanctions of the League of Nations.

Mehring's honesty and intellectual independence permit the reader to understand Marx as a human being subject to frailties which in a lesser man would be of no particular moment. Nor are they of great consequence in Marx save that the legend of Marx as a flaming, pure demigod has been so sedulously cultivated by those who without reading his works repeat his slogans at second and third hand, that the results of critical scholarship seem to be as iconoclastic as the recent discoveries of George Washington's drinking and verbal habits. There is no doubt that right as he was a thousand times over again in his opposition to Lassalle's ideas, Marx's evaluation of Lassalle as a man and political organizer falls far short of elementary justice and decency. It is also sad to observe the extent to which factional passion ravaged Marx's relations to Bakunin, an heroic figure whose intrepidity in the face of fierce governmental persecution and grinding poverty, matched, at the very least, Marx's own. Bakunin, warring on Marx, made public acknowledgment of Marx's scientific genius and never called his motives into question; Marx, influenced by the exigencies of internecine strife in the First International, circulated the canard that Bakunin was a Czarist spy. The irony of the situation is that Utin, the man who supplied Marx with the information, turned out later to be himself in the service of the Russian government.

The gentler sides of Marx's nature are revealed in his idyllic domestic relations. No man imbued with the fanaticism and consuming hatred attributed to him by his enemies could have been the kind of husband and father Marx showed himself to be. When not engaged in character destroying organizational conflicts and intrigues, Marx never failed to do homage to courage and intellectual integrity no matter under what colors they were found.

Mehring's biography is not of course merely the biography of Marx, the man, but in part a biography of Marx's epoch. All the more crucial, therefore, is the problem which it suggests to Marxist historians. For it is clear that at the time



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when Marx and Engels published the "Communist Manifesto," the hosts in whose name they thundered were precisely two, *viz.*, Marx and Engels themselves. As Arthur Rosenberg (the keen German historian, not to be confused with Alfred Rosenberg, the Nazi mythologist) has pointed out, there was not one among their immediate followers whom Marx and Engels by 1851 regarded as a genuine Marxist socialist. And later, Engels admitted that his own role as compared with Marx's was very subordinate indeed. Granted, then, the powerful influence which Marxian ideas had had upon the development of Western Europe—Lenin somewhere implies that without the Marxian theory of the State the Bolsheviks would never have led the Russian Revolution—the problem is to explain the tremendous influence of Marx in terms of Marx's own historical theory. Mehring's work makes it even more difficult to accept the views of Engels, Kautsky, and Bukharin according to whom if a great man had not existed at any time of crucial social need, some one else would have emerged to perform the necessary tasks—an absurdity which, with all its implications of pathetic animism has been fathered upon Marx by disciples and critics alike.

The facet of Marx's personality which shines brightest under Mehring's treatment is his revolutionary passion. It pervades all of Marx's writings, dictates the axis of his normative judgments, sharpens his eyes to the facts of oppression and injustice, and constitutes the driving force behind his social activity. This is the only justification for the much abused reference to Marx as the last of the great Hebrew prophets. There may be many Marxes but to Mehring, as to Lenin and Trotzky, Marx was, in the words which Engels used at Highgate Cemetery, "before all else a revolutionist."

Sidney Hook is on the faculty of New York University, and author of "Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx."

Customs and Costumes

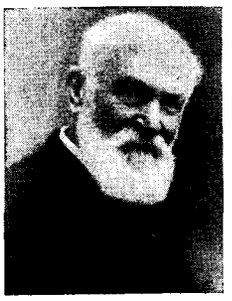
MODES AND MANNERS. By Max Von Boehn. Volumes 3 and 4. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1936. $4 each.

THESE are the last two volumes of a series of four, translated from the German by John Joshua, with a profusion of illustrations in color and halftone. The set of four volumes describes the fashions and social manners of the upper classes of Europe from the Middle Ages on through the eighteenth century. The present volumes are on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries respectively. Germany is the country in closest focus throughout. But the volumes contain much valuable material concerning all Europe, including England of course, in regard to learning, morality, culture, the arts, and costume. The illustrative matter is really superb. The object has been not only to provide the atmosphere of thought and feeling in which the people of the time lived, but numerous details of how their houses were furnished, what they ate, how they dressed. The condensation of much rich material is an outstanding feature.

My Life and Work

The Search for a Missing Glove

by **Dr. Adolf Lorenz**



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The Odyssey of

A LOVING WOMAN

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"Miss Oddie portrays with color and vitality the social scene into which young Jane, innocent and ignorant, was launched," the *Times* continues. "Through all her astonishing odyssey . . . she idealized love and sought nothing less than the ideal love and the ideal lover. With each new mate, whether legal or illicit, she was sure she had found what she longed for and, when he too proved of the earth, earthy, there was always another lover at hand in whom, at first, she just as eagerly believed.

"But the most astounding development of Jane's whole life was that final love episode that led her to the desert and the name she bore with pride for her last quarter century, 'Jane Digby el Mezrab.' Her Bedouin husband, said to have been an educated, cultured man of fine, strong and upright character, divorced for her his Bedouin wife.

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A BALANCED RATION FOR A WEEK'S READING

A WINTER DIARY AND OTHER POEMS. By Mark Van Doren. *Macmillan.*

PATHS OF GLORY. By Humphrey Cobb. *Viking.*

TECHNICS AND CIVILIZATION. By Lewis Mumford. *Harcourt, Brace.*

Novels of the Poor

M. E. S. of New York City *is most anxious to get the titles of about six books dealing with poverty*—"extreme poverty *in its various forms—novel form—modern or historical—written by such authors as Zola, etc.*" *"Where," she adds, "can I get cheap editions?"*

ZOLA'S PARIS, GERMINAL, and WORK, of course, come first to mind and Victor Hugo's LES MISERABLES. Dickens's OLIVER TWIST is a classic example from English literature (Macmillan has a sixty-cent edition of the book), and Gorky's CREATURES THAT ONCE WERE MEN (Modern Library) is a portrayal against the Russian background. Grosset & Dunlap issues Arnold Bennett's RICEYMAN STEPS in inexpensive form, but his CLAYHANGER, I am afraid, is only to be had in the Doubleday, Doran $2.50 edition. If M. E. S. wants more recent books she might select Walter Greenwood's LOVE ON THE DOLE (Doubleday, Doran) and Hans Fallada's LITTLE MAN, WHAT NOW? (Simon & Schuster). I have selected almost at random, for, alas and alack, the poor we have always with us, and books about the poor will always be found to describe their sufferings.

The City of New Orleans

M. C. R. of Sinking Spring, Pa., *headed for a convention in May in the "glamorous city of New Orleans," wants a list of books upon it.*

Being sentimental and a female, my mind immediately sprang to that book beloved of my childhood, C. V. Jamison's LADY JANE, which left me enamored of New Orleans long before a visit to it proved it one of the most interesting towns in America. But I'm simply indulging a forgotten enthusiasm by referring to it here for it is certainly neither meat nor mete for the masculine palate. The best book, I think, that M. C. R. will find for his purposes is FABULOUS NEW ORLEANS (Appleton-Century), by Lyle Saxon, illustrated by E. H. Suydam. Mr. Saxon, who is a Louisianian by birth and residence (fascinating descriptions he once gave me of the plantation on which he does most of his writing), presents here a series of vignettes of the city, full of color but accurate and painstaking in detail, together with historical material and description of the life, customs, and traditions of the town. Thus it includes chapters on the quadroon balls, the duelling oaks, and voodoo as well as accounts of the Mardi Gras, famous restaurants, etc. Mr. Saxon writes well and with animation, and his rich material yields interesting reading. Another volume which should prove useful, though it cannot claim the graces of style of the preceding, is Nathaniel Cortlandt Curtis's NEW ORLEANS: ITS OLD HOUSES, SHOPS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS (Lippincott). Its author is an architect and knows whereof he speaks. If M. C. R. wants to know something of the personal side of New Orleans history he will find it in Grace S. King's CREOLE FAMILIES OF NEW ORLEANS (Macmillan), and if he wants impressions of an earlier day which still have charm and value he should read Lafcadio Hearn's CREOLE SKETCHES (Houghton Mifflin). Finally, he could read to his enjoyment Thomas Bailey Aldrich's THE STORY OF A BAD BOY and such fiction as George W. Cable's novels and stories.

Sioux Indian Wars

Sister F. M. of Chicago, Ill., *wants the names of two or three books dealing with the Sioux Indian wars of the sixties and seventies.*

She will find one of the most interesting, as it is one of the most recent, Walter S. Campbell's SITTING BULL, CHAMPION OF THE SIOUX (Houghton Mifflin). This is a volume which embodies the results of the most careful research but at the same time handles its dramatic material with lively appreciation of its interest for the general reader. The same author's WARPATH (Houghton Mifflin) contains further studies in Sioux history. Sister F. M. will also find much information in DEATH ON THE PRAIRIE (Macmillan), by P. I. Wellman, G. Freeman's ADVANCING THE FRONTIER (University of Pennsylvania Press), P. E. Byrne's SOLDIERS OF THE PLAINS (Minton, Balch), and NARRATIVES OF THE INDIAN WARS (Scribners), edited by C. H. Lincoln.

A Shipbuilding Magazine

Apropos of my answer to his inquiry some weeks ago concerning a shipbuilding magazine R. T. McS. of Sierra Madre, Calif., kindly writes:

> I have also discovered another publication which is what I require: *The Shipbuilder and Marine Engine Builder* (monthly), published by The Shipbuilder Press., Townsville House, Newcastle-on-Tyne. In addition to its twelve regular issues a year, it has an annual International Number; and whenever an important new ship is completed, a special (extra) issue is devoted entirely to that ship. The most recent of these souvenir issues is devoted to the *Normandie*—a large book of 154 pages of text and 56 pages of ads—a wealth of information on this beautiful ship. It is very valuable for model builders—which was the reason I was looking for such a magazine.

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The New Books

Biography

THE LADY OF BLEEDING HEART YARD. By Laura Norworthy. Harcourt, Brace. 1936. $3.

Lady Elizabeth Hatton, granddaughter of Elizabeth's Lord Burleigh, was left a wealthy widow at nineteen, wooed by Francis Bacon and wedded by his rival Edward Coke, the great commentator on the common law, who shortly found her the most formidable of his many antagonists. She passed from quarreling with her husband, from whom she separated, to quarreling with the reigning favorite, the duke of Buckingham, a quarrel intensified by the famous scandal occasioned by her daughter's desertion of Buckingham's brother. When Buckingham died, Lady Hatton transferred her hostility to the royal family so that her house became the social center of the Long Parliament and she the greatest lady of the Roundhead party.

Her stormy career left ample traces in the letters, memoirs, and legal records of the time which her biographer has collected with scholarly care, but her colorful and fascinating personality has proved more evanescent. In refusing the license of fiction, this book has not always been able to avoid dulness or preserve a unity of interest, but it affords some interesting glimpses of the life of the great in Jacobean times, even though its most entertaining pages have little to do with its nominal heroine.

G. M.

Fiction

SOUTHERN ALBUM. By Sara Haardt. Doubleday, Doran. 1936. $2.

This is a posthumous collection of his wife's short stories, edited with a most understanding and interesting preface by Henry L. Mencken. Mrs. Mencken, he tells us, "wrote and published about forty stories in all, and left a few more unpublished." Out of all this work he has selected seventeen tales to represent her. She contemplated a novel to be called "The Plantation" and to deal with "the sinister hold that the Deep South has upon its children." When she died, this novel was still only in scenario form. The other book she contemplated was to be "An amalgam of fiction and fact" about the South, and its projected title her husband has borrowed for the present book.

Miss Haardt prided herself on her German descent and, although very critical of "Southern charm," possessed it herself in its delightful essence as well as deep sentiment for the South. The stories in this book, says the editor, have been arranged by him "in the order of the ages of the people in them, beginning with the oldest, though this puts the weakest first." Miss Haardt set store, particularly, by her studies of little girls—and these, of course, come last. The merit of the collection, judged from as detached a point of view as possible, is uneven; but "The Manor," "All in the Family," "Namesake," "Each in Her Own Day," all contain memorable characters. At the end of the book Edward J. O'Brien's judgment of the worth of "Little White Girl" is to us completely vindicated by the story itself, and the final sketch, "Dear Life," founded on the author's own struggles with physical pain which was always lurking in her life, is a remarkable identification of the South as she perceived it with the very spirit of death, both in its decay and its peculiar beauty.

That there are certain lesser stories here is undeniable, but four or five certainly rise above the average run. Miss Haardt seems to have known her South, in a period of change, quite thoroughly in many aspects, and she possessed a warm love of human character. Hence it is particularly tragic that she could not have lived to give us fuller work, perhaps a novel of the South that would have been even more significant than those we have lately had.

W. R. B.

THE ROLLING YEARS. By Agnes Sligh Turnbull. Macmillan. 1936. $2.50.

Among all the novels of the American soil, there have been many pictures of Calvinists, and many pictures of sensible and kindly folk; but this must be the first that shows us sensible and kindly Calvinists. "The Rolling Years" takes place in a Scottish farming community in western Pennsylvania, and covers some forty years, beginning in the seventies of the last century. It was a time, a place, and a people to whom Calvinism was still a compelling force. The opening episode of the book shows its family facing the one fine day of the summer, the one day that might have saved the wheat falling on a Sunday; and the Hendersons unquestioningly spend the day in divine worship—the long drive to the meeting-house, the morning service, the cold lunch, the afternoon service when the men solemnly walk up and down the aisles so as not to fall asleep during the sermon. But if Calvinism is a compulsion, it is a comfort, too; those Sundays at the meeting-house are the greatest happiness of the Hendersons' lives; we feel that. And a neighbor who spent the day getting in his wheat is seriously condemned, but is wholly received into public and private fellowship after a reprimand from the elders. So we feel throughout that whatever he may have been in Geneva, Calvin's God in Pennsylvania is austere but not unforgiving.

This moderate and no doubt truthful view, though it gives value to the story as a picture of the American scene, weakens the narrative. For the author relies for her plot on the old conflict of generations, and where the folk on both generations are so warm-hearted and the religion so tempered with mercy, the dramatic conflict is very slight. Even without this, it must be confessed that the plot would be the least valuable part of the book; the nominal hero and heroine, the wild-bird daughter of conven-

(*Continued on page* 23)

By
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EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

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"In thus translating Baudelaire, the American poets are paying back Baudelaire for translating Edgar Allan Poe. I follow the writing of Miss Millay with eagerness and it is for her poems in English that I recommend this book."
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"Signature"

THE first number of a new English journal devoted to the Graphic Arts has been received. It is a quarto of seventy-two pages, paper covered.

The contents include a description, by Holbrook Jackson, of the "Sanctuary" at Oxford, where Mr. John Johnson, the Printer to Oxford University, has gathered an amazing mass of ephemeral printing to replace, in a sense, the great collection of Oxford printing which was collected by the later Falconer Madan and now reposes in the library of Yale University. Some examples of Mr. Johnson's treasures are given in reproduction.

"New Draughtsmen," by Paul Nash, with an illustrated essay on the wood engravings of Eric Ravilious, and a series of new initial letters by Barnett Freedman, emphasize the pictorial side of the graphic arts. The initial letters, intended for use with all kinds of paper and type, are new and startling—and will look as antique in ten years as the initials in George Bruce's Specimen book of 1869! But they are interesting. Book reviews and some pages of advertising complete this first number, which is a little thin, but all the more welcome, as being easily read and digested. Its faults are: a dull type face ("Walbaum"), punctuation marks placed outside of quotations, and—an inexcusable fault in much British printing—the grain of the paper runs the wrong way of the binding edge: I know of no little thing so irritating.

The price of *Signature* is eleven shillings for the three numbers. The contents are of distinct interest, and the fact that it is edited by Oliver Simon (who edited the first four numbers of the *Fleuron*) promises well for its future.

The Sermon on the Mount

"First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

If the way of the transgressor is hard, who should know it better than the reviewer? I wrote an innocent little paragraph two weeks ago about a new edition of the Sermon on the Mount. I had not seen it in print before Mr. Duschnes wrote me in protest: the *Review* had hardly arrived on my desk before Mr. Angelo added his grieved protest. Now let me see if I can get the matter straight.

One hundred and thirty-five copies of this book were printed by Hawthorn House for Valenti Angelo who will issue books under the designation of The Golden Cross Press. Mr. Angelo illuminated the copies himself. Of these 135 copies, twenty-five were donated to the members of The Columbiad Club of Connecticut. The remainder of the edition, 110 copies, were sold to Mr. Duschnes for retail distribution. The 110 copies which were disposed of to Mr. Duschnes were bound with more leather, and had additional decorations, particularly an added blue border to each page.

Any way you look at it, the book is a good piece of work, and both Mr. Angelo and Mr. Duschnes may well be proud of it and sensitive to erroneous statements about it.

Notes

The Book Club of California announces as its 1936 series of publications The California Literary Pamphlets. The initial number, "Over an Absinthe Bottle," a short story by W. C. Morrow, has been printed as an octavo, paper-covered booklet by the Grabhorn Press. Other numbers in the series will appear bimonthly.

WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS. The New York Public Library has issued a large quarto volume which contains about all that can be said about this document. There is a facsimile reproduction of the final draft, a full and detailed history of the Address by Victor Hugo Paltsits, correspondence and documents, and a bibliography. As a carefully arranged volume it will take high place among secondary sources, and its contents leaves little more to say. The printing has been done with equal care by the New York Public Library printing office. The only possible criticisms would suggest a mellower color for the paper, and a title-page more in scale with the volume as a whole.

The Overbrook Press has issued for members of the Yale Library Associates two addresses by Professor Tinker and Mr. Rollins delivered at the exercises held in memory of William Morris at the Yale University Library last year. Typography and presswork are exceptionally good: Unfortunately the decorations inevitably suggest comparison with Kelmscott work.

Want to Rent a House for the Summer?

Read this letter just received from an advertiser in the PERSONAL columns of the March 14th issue of The Saturday Review.

ADVERTISEMENT:

HAVE YOU A SHACK for the summer or a house for the year, one to three hours from New York, to rent to a writer's family that has been living a civilized life in the wilds of northern Michigan? Price a necessary consideration. Testimonial from present landlord. Box 120-B.

RESULT:

April 8, 1936.

Dear Saturday Review:

I suppose there is no way that is legal for me to stop receiving the letters that keep coming in in answer to Box 120-B. But it does seem a shame for those who answer and for you to have to keep on using postage in a lost cause.

The cause is lost because my ad for "A shack for the summer or a house for the year" has brought to date seventeen (I think it is) replies, most of them of a superior nature and because one was of such a superior nature, so exactly suited my needs, in fact went beyond any hope I had in regard to fitting nearly all requirements, that I am signed up for a year and no longer in the market.

I think it might interest you to know that the man whose house I am renting said that he never placed property in the hands of real estate agents and never answered blind ads, but that the place that The Saturday Review held in his regard was such that he thought it was worth taking a chance on.

All blessings to The Saturday Review. It has been my good friend twice this year.

Sincerely, E. B.

(Name and address will be given on request)

SEE THIS WEEK'S PERSONALS ON PAGE 25

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 107)

THOMAS H. HUXLEY—"AUTOBIOGRAPHY."

There is no alleviation for the sufferings of mankind except veracity of thought and of action, and the resolute facing of the world . . . when the garment of make-believe, by which pious hands have hidden its uglier features, is stripped off.

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The New Books

(*Continued from page 21*)

tional parents and the serious young man who argues at length that God would not damn infants—they have been done often and sometimes better.

But the book will not be read for the plot, nor for the characters who carry on the plot, but for its numerous pictures of a happy vanished life—the quilting and the farming, the whole life of an all but wholly self-sufficient community. This so illumines the book that in recollection it seems all to take place in summer sunshine or winter firelight.

B. D.

CHRISTINA. By Claude Houghton. Doubleday, Doran. 1936. $2.50.

Claude Houghton ought to patent his plots—they are so ingenious and repetitious. In "I Am Jonathan Scrivener," published several years ago, a certain man found himself secretary to a mysterious personage whom he had never seen, became involved with the friends of the unknown Scrivener, and through them discovered his almost supernatural significance. In "This Was Ivor Trent," one of Mr. Houghton's more recent books, a young admirer of Trent, the novelist, when Trent was seized with delirium, explored the enigma of his character by interviewing the strange people that had entered into his life. Now, in "Christina," Peter Brand, enraged at the hidden letters written to an unnamed lover, by his dead wife, Christina, whom he had never really understood, tracks down the queer derelicts she had visited in secret, and distorts the testimonies to her loveliness into a mad justification of his sinister intentions. Separately, these books whip your curiosity, but read in succession, they steal one another's thunder.

D. K.

TO MARY WITH LOVE. By Richard Sherman. Little, Brown. 1936. $1.25.

This novelette is written, somewhat in the form of a letter, to "Mary." One discovers at the end that it is an appeal to memory, a deliberate reprise of ten years, sent instead of a brief to a woman who is contemplating a divorce. The man who writes it is at once her lawyer, and, in the mute fashion of those neutral characters who are narrators of stories, her old adorer. He is the usual faithful-dog, family-friend, type of observer, predestined from the first page to a life of self-sacrificing devotion. His brief,—the whole book,—is designed to bring Mary up sharp, to renew her memory of what she and her husband have been through together. It is a sketch of the past ten years, a kind of illustrated chart of prosperity, crash, and depression. It leans very heavily for its effect on the fact that those particular years are already completely crystallized in the public imagination by books such as "Only Yesterday," but its very dependence on a now stereotyped picture of our immediate past gives it a certain artificiality, a dryness that is inimical to a warm, living rush of memory.

It does, however, "come off," it does seem to round out and isolate a whole of experience. It does not go deep, its characters, paper-thin and two-dimensional, are types and no more, yet it is close enough to the surface pattern of life to produce an illusion of truth.

C. C.

Philosophy

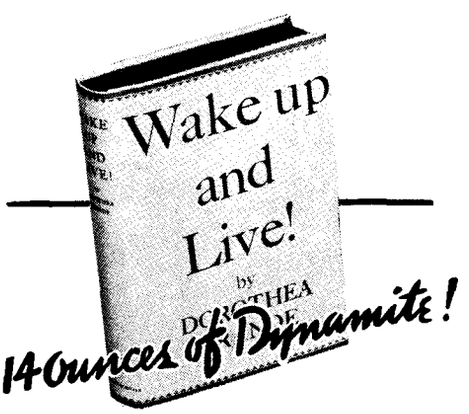
RETURN TO PHILOSOPHY. By C. E. M. Joad. Dutton. 1936. $2.50.

Mr. Joad's book starts with an amusing account of the business man or banker who diffidently lets you in on the secret that he has a neatly typed manuscript containing a few thoughts, a new key to universal philosophy. The author adds, concerning such amateur philosophers, "The line that separates the profoundest metaphysical speculation from nonsense pure and simple is never easy to draw." Self-deceit is only too easy.

The author extends his biting sarcasms more widely, including more particularly the Christian Scientists among the amateur philosophers. He finally settles down to a disproportionately prolonged polemic against Aldous Huxley, with incidental flings at D. H. Lawrence. Joad maintains that there are standards, there are objective values, beauty, truth, and goodness. Reason has its independence of mere living, and even Huxley admits there are standards while pretending to deny them, standards to which the reasonable man will conform. Huxley is typical of a general tendency today to scorn philosophy.

In the last section of the book Mr. Joad rises to a higher level, in an able defense of the value of philosophy, which is "a window—less clear than art or religion, but a window nevertheless—through which the consciousness of man attains a vision of the world of being." In spite of exalted passages, and of deeply felt passages, as in the Epilogue on the distractions of militarism, there is still an effect of dilution about the book, of loose writing and parenthetical details, which makes it something less than the brilliant defense of the value of philosophy which it sets out to be.

H. T. C.



Two weeks ago 1843 people bought copies of this book. Last week 2654 more did so.

REASON: Word is passing around that *Wake Up and Live!* has performed some minor miracles in the private lives of those who have read it.

SIMON AND SCHUSTER, *Publishers*
386-4th Avenue, New York City

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE RUBBER BAND *Rex Stout* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.)	Aftermath of English lord's fantastic promise brings violent death to two and great *kudos* to Nero Wolfe.	Another Nero knock-out with narrator-stooge Archie Goodwin crowding his big boss for interest.	Regal fare
THE ROSE OF DEATH *Walter Masterman* (Dutton: $2.)	Three London killings with white rose attached bring Sir A. Sinclair from retirement after young amateurs fail.	Out of rather well worn material author weaves tale of ruthless and somewhat looney envenomer that won't fag the most tired brain.	Below par
RING AROUND A MURDER *George Bagby* (Covici-Friede: $2.)	Elderly head of hideous New York clan brutally slain. Inspector Schmidt, with aching feet, tracks killer.	Schmidt is amusing and clever: plot is gory and intricate: wind up long-winded but satisfactorily surprising.	Very good

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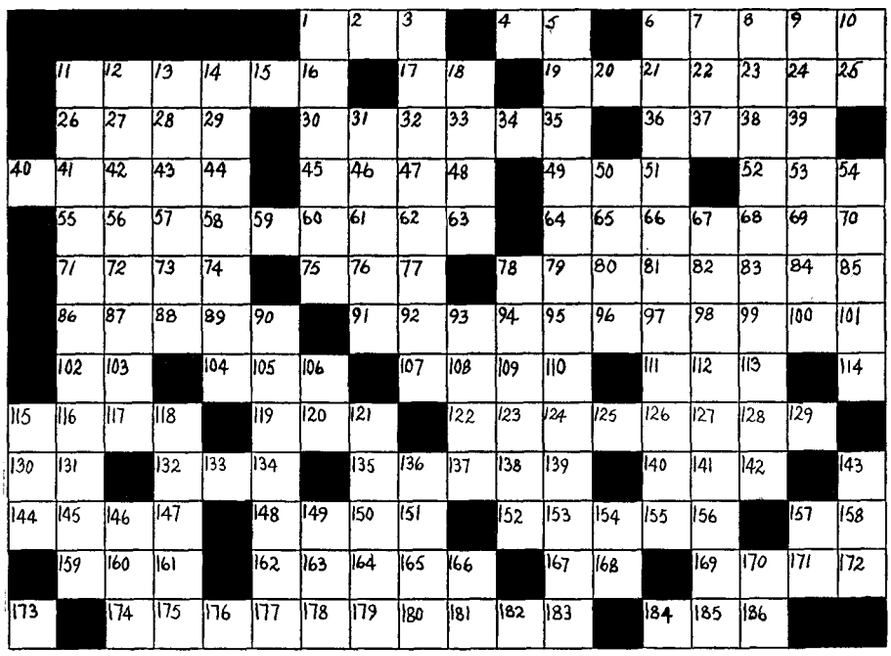
Double-Crostics: No. 108

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Unless otherwise indicated, the author is English or American.

DEFINITIONS.

I. English poet (1752-1770).

II. Graciously, mildly.

III. Hodgepodge.

IV. Fiery river in Hades (Gr.).

V. Coarse-complexioned; slovenly.

VI. To interlace.

VII. American novelist (1885—).

VIII. Distinctive features.

IX. Season, occasion.

X. Home of the Brontës.

XI. Catches sight of.

XII. A whirling on the toes.

XIII. Open work fabrics.

XIV. Readily.

XV. Designer.

XVI. English dramatist (1751-1816).

XVII. Not suitable.

XVIII. Drama by XVI.

XIX. A structure.

XX. Exhibitor.

XXI. Assault.

XXII. Cringed.

XXIII. American novelist (1804-64).

XXIV. Unrelated parts or fragments.

XXV. Kind of carriage.

XXVI. Followed.

WORDS

60	7	47	119	133	161	38	29	123	112	
34	168	14	127	174	67	3				
98	76	118	2	122	61	158	153			
62	105	51	54	70	156	75	160	103	48	
116	12	149	110	136	186					
145	69	152	176	13	125	87				
178	121	24	157	134						
169	79	96	42	30	65	175	155	101	59	
26	66	78	180							
53	111	144	167	74	45	120				
85	64	31	177	117	19					
32	130	138	17	124	10	159	102	106		
86	49	11	151	40						
99	164	173	27	55	25					
21	114	84	140	108	126	182	162	147		
77	20	72	181	170	113	95	88			
137	92	18	154	81	44	139	4			
35	132	107	82	50	90					
63	89	68	15	128	93	43				
143	148	8	1	166	56	100				
23	129	9	172	52						
171	135	41	71	142	179					
94	73	184	6	46	37	165	83	109		
5	183	58	36	146	131	104	16			
150	163	185	33	97	115	28				
91	57	80	141	39	22					

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 22 of this issue.

BOOK SHARING WEEK

APRIL 16-23

ONE MILLION books are urgently needed by the hospitals, institutions, orphanages, prisons, and charitable organizations of Greater New York. All types of books are asked for; not necessarily new books, but books (or magazines) you have read and are willing to pass on where they will be appreciated. How many books will you give? For further details of this plan see page 21 of the April 11th issue of the SRL, or communicate with The Book Sharing Week Committee, Hotel Biltmore, N. Y. C.; Telephone MUrray Hill 2-7920.

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ADVERTISING rates for this Classified Department are as follows: For twenty or more consecutive insertions of any copy, minimum twelve words, 6 cents a word each insertion; for any less number of insertions 8 cents a word each insertion. Copy may be changed every week. The forms close Friday morning, eight days before publication date. Address Department G. H., The Saturday Review of Literature, 25 West 45th Street, New York City, telephone BRyant 9-0896.

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BACK NUMBERS OF MAGAZINES at Abraham's Bookstore, 141 Fourth Avenue, New York.

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MAGAZINES — ONE OF THE LARGEST stocks of back numbers. Sharan's, 4019 Broadway, N. Y. C.

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FIRST EDITIONS, FINE PRESS, CATALOGUES. PHILIP DUSCHNES, 507 Fifth Avenue, New York.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY AND WILLIAM McFEE FIRST EDITIONS. Catalogue. Charles K. Stotlemeyer, Hancock, Maryland.

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BOOKS on Russian art in all languages, rare editions richly illustrated and modern monographs. Rosen, 410 Riverside Drive, N. Y. C.

GENERAL

BANNED BOOKS by Anne Lyon Haight. From Homer to Hemingway. With historical annotations. "For all censors professional and amateur." $1.50. R. R. Bowker Co., 62 West 45 St.

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PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purposes and character of The Saturday Review. Rates: 7 cents per word, including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Payment in full must be received ten days in advance of publication. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

SILVERMINE TAVERN AND GALLERIES, Norwalk, Conn. Tel. 2300. An old time country inn. One hour from N. Y. Booklet R on request.

SURPRISE BOXES, Birthday or Convalescent, for children 3 to 10 yrs. Prices: $3.00, $5.00 and $10.00. Kindly give name, age, and favorite interest of child when ordering. "Windwards," P. O. Box 114, Wyncote, Pa.

"DON'T-SNORE"—Small, gold device. Prevents snoring, mouth-breathing. $1.00. Satisfaction guaranteed. Circular free. D. K. Thaxly Company, Washington, D. C.

SUBLET June 1-October 1. $85. Charming four room garden apartment. Greenwich Village. Near all subways and buses. Box 170-B.

ATTENTION! Writers, speakers, quotations and excerpts; unusual, large variety. Write for lists. Box 197-B.

DESPERATE FEMALE—Hope zoology Ph.D. in June. Bloody but unbowed by education. Scottish-Dutch ancestry. Age 29. Teaching experience 3 years. Wish research assistantship or instructing biology in progressive college or workers' school. Any interesting work with any variety of animal. Salary essential. Write Box 206-B.

GENTLEMAN who likes to talk Italian and/or Spanish would like to make acquaintance of person of either nationality. Box 211-B.

WHO NEEDS A CHAUFFEUSE during July and August? Box 214-B.

PERSONALS

FRANCO-AMERICAN LADY of refinement, culture, leisure, and perfect knowledge of French, will correspond with anyone wishing to learn, improve, or perfect their French language. No charges or obligations whatsoever. Box 189-B.

LITTLE THEATRE DIRECTOR wants any kind of work any place for the summer. strong, intelligent, capable, thirtyish. Box 212-B.

YOUNG NEW YORK JEWESS seeks interesting correspondence with individualistic unattached males. Box 213-B.

WANTED: Four agreeable bachelors, any age; fine home, good food; forty-five minutes from Broadway. Box 215-B.

DESIGNER & BUILDER of small homes in prosperous Southern State offers half interest in established business to congenial partner with capital. Knowledge of interior decoration helpful but not essential. Box 217-B.

TENNIS ENTHUSIAST stranded in Boston. Anyone in similar predicament? Box 218-B.

COULD ANYONE use an English teacher, 27, unsalable literary interests, office experience, about to fire herself, cash that Retirement Fund, and go to work? Box 219-B.

I WILL SHARE expenses of driving into country Sundays. Have you automobile? New York City vicinity. Box 220-B.

IS THERE around Manhattan an unattached, mature gentleman who wants to correspond with cultured, vivacious congenial girl? Box 221-B.

WANTED from July fifth to August seventeenth small furnished apartment short walking distance of Columbia University and subway. Box 222-B.

MUSIC-LOVER, Manhattan, will give your well-treated orthophonic recorded Master-Works good home. Remuneration. Box 223-B.

FOR SALE: Interesting collection of old books, including Missal. Small private library. Box 224-B.

LOS ANGELES PROFESSIONAL WOMAN, ex-New Yorker, 30ish, interested in books, gardens, travel, people, would enjoy correspondence with a professional man 35 to 45. Sincerity more desirable than literary finesse. Box 210-B.

EUROPE. Position wanted as nursery-governess, capable, experienced, good traveller. Visa, temporary, permanent; highest references. Box 202-B.

NEGLECTED MAN—mature, tolerant, sense of humor, potential discoverer of a creative listener—dreams of rescue from boredom. Box 225-B.

SUMMER EMPLOYMENT wanted by three teachers. Anything legitimate. Salary secondary. Best references furnished. Reliable, ambitious, dependable. Box 226-B.

WOMAN wants work. Clerk, cook, companion, tutor, housekeeper? Box 227-B.

LADY, advanced graduate student in English, British and American education, seeks work, literary or otherwise. Has studied French literature; would travel. Box 228-B.

NEWSPAPER GIRL, 26, small town, in rut. Seeks correspondence with man, 30-40, of varied interests, individual philosophy, humor. Object: layman's eye-view of another's career, hobby, outlook. No stuffies, please. Box 230-B.

CONNOISSEURS, GOURMETS, people who know coffee . . . famous blend, rich, winey taste, unforgettable aroma. Not available in stores. Send one dollar for 3 pounds, postpaid. Richard H. Toeplitz, 67 Broad Street, New York.

PERSONALS

AUXILIARY KEEL SLOOP, a beauty and a bargain, real deep sea blue water fast sailing—well kept, better than new, twenty feet, sleeps two. Box 216-B.

CAN ANYONE RECOMMEND a socially simple way of living, a stimulating project without recompense, or an avenue of inspiration for a young English teacher anticipating her first sabbatical year. Box 231-B.

TEACHER of hand-loom weaving, raffia, and crochet would like position in camp, school, or institution for summer. Box 229-B.

WANTED: To buy interest in bookstore. Box 232-B.

ATTRACTIVELY furnished rooms overlooking Central Park. Housekeeping privilege if desired. Refinement. Reasonable. Box 233-B.

EXPERIENCED DIRECTOR (Yale Drama School, Summer Theatre, Civic Theatre) wants summer position directing superior plays. Box 234-B.

REASONABLE BOARD in beautiful valley of Virginia, college town. Box 773 Lexington, Virginia.

BLESS THE LITTLE LEATHER TRUNK for yielding up a precious memento! Coax it to do so again soon,—and often. "Auf wiedersehn"!!

VACATION as guests of "nouveaux pauvres" in delightful old farm-house (completely and comfortably modernized) on island in Casco Bay. Eggs, milk, vegetables home grown. Private bathing beach, walking, croquet, golf, boating, fishing. Rates surprisingly reasonable, especially June and September. "Sea Meadows," Cousins Island, Maine.

GRACIOUS CONSTANCE, the moon is slightly less than one and three tenths seconds distant in light year time. Isn't it possible for one to be stumbling over rather than reaching for the moon? West.

DETROITERS: The Saturday camp for children makes Saturday free for parents. Address: Saturday Camp, Northville, Michigan.

CULTIVATED CREATURE, thirty, implores aid to regain health. Box 235-B.

EURYDICE of Conn. Promethus craves your omitted address.

WOULD A YOUNG LADY exchange dancing lessons for fencing lessons? Box 236-B.

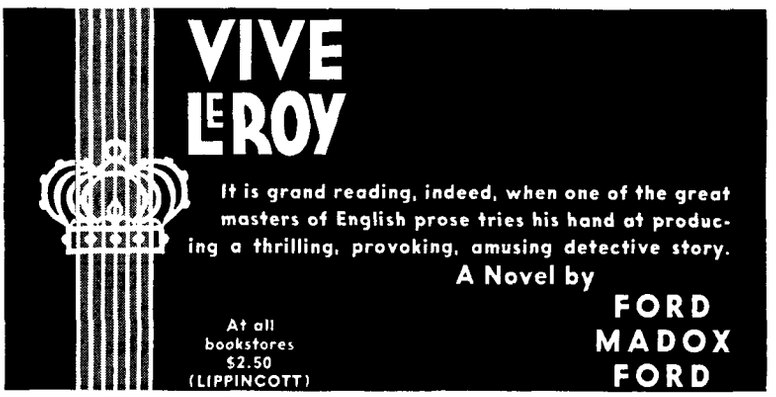
FOR RENT, June 15-Sept. 15, charming, small, lovely house, completely furnished; cool exposure; East End Avenue, New York City; facing river and park; accommodating price to discriminating people. Box 237-B.

LIVE AWAY FROM METROPOLITAN CENTERS and can't find what you want in local shops?—I'll scour New York for anything from a bottle of chutney to a lithograph of Leonardo da Vinci's Jesus. Cost you no more than purchase price plus shipping. SHOPPING SERVICE.

RANDOLPH, N. H., in the White Mountains. Within five miles are eleven mountain summits; twenty notable cascades; 147 miles of mountain trail; several good hotels. Furnished cottage of seven rooms and bath, $216 for the season. Large camp for June $25; July, $40; September, $50. Small camp by the day, $1.50. Louis F. Cutter, 33 Chestnut St., Salem, Mass.

MOUNTAIN LAUGHTER! I have a rendezvous . . . with you. "D."

SPACIOUS BARN APARTMENT, furnished, to rent for the season, $200, at Stony Creek, Conn., on Long Island Sound. Fischer, 245 Bradley Street, New Haven, Conn.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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

SORRY we forgot to note that April 10 was Hazlitt's birthday; the day he had the sherry and cold chicken at the inn in Llangollen. ☞We always meant to find out something about the "Ladies of Llangollen," eccentric bluestockings who were undoubtedly amusing; but life is too short. ☞Pleased by attractive Travelling Bookcases in colored leathers, large enough to hold a dozen novels, shown in the window of Crouch & Fitzgerald on Madison Avenue. A paper cutter tucked into the lid of the case; and there'd be room also for a copy of the *Saturday Review*. ☞Chill and sombre though it be, Old Prosodic Q. felt a poem coming through his system:—

The sky's a commutation ticket
(This is my astronomic hunch):
At night the Conductor comes to nick it
With his star-shaped punch.

☞Mr. E. S. McCawley, president of the American Booksellers Association, tells us that the Association, after careful work by a New York committee and a national jury of 15 leading booksellers in other cities, is planning four awards of literary interest. At the annual A. B. A. banquet, May 11, these will be announced, and medals given, as follows:—

For the *Most Distinguished Novel,*
The *Most Original Novel,*
The *Most Distinguished Biography,* and
The *Most Distinguished Non-Fiction Work,*

published during the preceding year. The A. B. A. believes that the intelligent bookseller should serve as a touchstone of the public interest, and hopes these awards will attract wide attention, "not through the selection of best sellers but by weighing qualities of distinction and permanence." ☞John Howell of San Francisco sends *Trade Winds* a copy of his de luxe album *California in the Fifties,* a book of fifty reproductions from early lithographs, with introduction and text by Douglas S. Watson. The plates are grand excitement to any Californiac and range from the first view of Yosemite Valley ever reproduced, through scenes of San Francisco and the mining towns to the Oregon Territory and Virginia City, Nevada. The plates have been made from the only complete collection of original artists' proofs now in existence. The book was prepared under the direction of Edwin Grabhorn; the edition is limited to 1000, and our copy (it is highly prized) is one of 850 on Highway Text, bound in buckram, and offered at $10.00. 100 copies with duplicate plates, insertions of original material, finer paper and binding, sell for $35.00; 50 copies like these, but each with one of the original lithographs, are offered at prices varying from $50.00 to $150.00. ☞Eddie Ziegler of Doubleday's always stops at the Stevens Hotel in Chicago. He reports that the Stevens has a show window exhibiting a sample of the furnished living-rooms on its Residential Floor. The books shown are Hevesy's *Beethoven the Man;* Newton's *Magnificent Farce;* Don Marquis's *Almost Perfect State.* ☞In Columbus Mr. Ziegler heard a lady asking at a book counter for *Pernicious on Wheels.*

☞Congratulations to Marion Dodd who has been celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the Hampshire Bookshop this week at Northampton, with dinners, teas, and other festivities. Among the participating celebrants were authors Robert Frost, Leland Hall, and Martha Dickinson Bianchi; and publishers B. W. Huebsch, Bennett Cerf, and Frances Phillips.

☞Always interested in any kind of ritual, Q. loves to hear his Jewish friends intone the Four Kashas, or Solemn Questions, at Passover. He doesn't know how the invocation is written, but it sounds like *Má Nish Tá Norr, Halílaw Hazaír;* and means *Why on This Night Rather Than All Other Nights?* ☞The only other syllables equally impressive are the mystical Dutch we once found on a stone vessel and sometimes intone to ourself:—

Wij verklaren dese kruik
In onze Fabriek gevuld te zign
Met Hulstkamp's Oude Genever.

☞Old Q. has decided not to strain himself Keeping Up with literature. Dr. Walter Broun, president of the American Optometric Association, said lately that concentrated use of the eyes consumes more nervous energy in one hour than swinging a pick all day. ☞But can one swing a pick (to any purpose) without also pretty acute eye focus? ☞We happened to hear that the only books in Joseph Horne's big department (Pittsburgh) which were not destroyed by the recent flood were 5 copies of General Johnson's *Blue Eagle.* ☞Was it just coincidence that the General was in Pittsburgh during the deluge? ☞Mr. Joe Estabrook, manager of Horne's book department, hastened to N. Y. and replaced the rest of his stock. ☞We haven't heard from Madeline Thune, capable madonna of G. Fox's busy book department in Hartford, whether the swollen Connecticut made trouble for her; probably not, as G. Fox keep their books on the balcony. ☞George Boller of Chicago kindly tells us more about the famous old Bookworm picture (ancient bibliophile on stepladder). Carl Spitzweg, the artist, lived in Munich (1808-1885) and the original painting hangs in the Lichtenstein Gallery in Vienna.

☞Apology for two gross errors in the *Winds* of April 4 (which palpitating old Q. wrote hastily so he could go on a binge with Phoenix.) The famous Leaning Pile of books was a Star Dollar stunt, not Blue Ribbon; and of course the Planetarium in Chicago is the Adler, not the Hayden. The Hayden is in N. Y. ☞Raymond Adams of Chapel Hill, N. C., in his monthly News Letter about Thoreau, remarks that Thoreau was familiar with broccoli as long ago as 1849. He also recommended woodchucks as good eating. ☞In Columbus old Q. found "Ohio Crow" offered on a swank hotel menu, but he has been Eating Crow (in another sense) all his life. ☞There are a lot of interesting things in Charles K. Stotlemeyer's new catalogue of Firsts (Hancock, Maryland). For instance a presentation copy of Don Marquis's *archys life of mehitabel* signed by the roach himself. ☞Living in a town called Hancock, Mr. Stotlemeyer naturally inclines to unusual autographs.

Over the Counter

The Saturday Review's Guide to Current Attractions

Trade Mark	*Label*	*Contents*	*Flavor*
NEVER IN VAIN *J. L. Hardy* (Doubleday, Doran: $2.)	Novel	Ever hear of a guy born with a shiny gat in his mouth? Take Andrew Kerr—a swell guy but with an itching trigger finger. Comes a gal—Oh, there's still trouble but—	Gripping
LIFE IS FOR LIVING *Kay Lipke* (Stokes: $2.)	Love Story	The Kincaid gal—and she's a beauty, gents—falls in love as frequently as one falling into debt. Then guy No. 4 comes along—finis!	Phewtile
CALIFORNIA CABALLERO *William Colt Macdonald* (Covici-Friede: $2.)	Western	"You pig gringo," warbled the Mexican babe. The tall, lean, tanned, steady-eyed Texan grinned. And he then ups and saves her from a snatch and her old man's ranch.	Purty Shootin'
STAR-WAGON *Peggy Wood* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.)	Novel	A bouquet of jinxes greet writer Jim and actress Tessa, mates, when the Hollywood Curse models in mud. Ah, comes the dawn—but very trite.	The Gong
THEY BLOCKED THE SUEZ CANAL *A. D. Divine* (Green Circle Books: $2.)	Adventure	Stealing a march on Rome! Two ships laden with concrete and scrap iron strategically sunk . . . A good yarn, and no bromo for the current European headache.	Raw meat for the Lion of Judah

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not many ads are *damned* by the booksellers!

Dear William Morrow & Co.:

Please come down out of your tree.

Far be it from me to complain about a publisher's spending money for advertising, but why waste good space indicting a nation?

Four days ago, when that ad of yours, "How many books are banned by the booksellers?" appeared in the Sat. Rev., I very nearly walked all the way down to 386 Fourth Avenue to ask you: "What the Hell—haven't you ever heard of a *good* bookseller?"

For they do exist, and many of them. Clever people who are doing their jobs magnificently—who are not only trying to keep up with the deluge of new books each month, but who are doing their damnedest to stimulate a healthy independence of reading taste.

In fact, your ad burned me up all last week-end, but Monday when I began to hear some pretty mean things being said about you, I experienced a reviving sense of justice. For I've always liked your house, and your list, and I hate to see the neglect of LIKE THE PHOENIX (or any other non-bestseller) carry you to extremes.

Now your question "Little book, what now?" is perfectly legitimate. Maybe LIKE THE PHOENIX is a good book that is being submerged by the tide of bestsellers, and maybe most of the trade did exhibit a deplorable lethargy in this instance. But please, William Morrow, why couldn't you have toned down your generality, have made it clear that there are many exceptions—booksellers who every day are helping patrons to discover exciting little known books?

Of course there are bookstores that are badly run, inadequately stocked. There is also the haunted bookshop—haunted by overstock. You are perfectly right in your statement of a general evil, and the sad situation which sends so many fine works to perish in a purgatory of disinterest—sometimes even of opposition.

But isn't it also fair to ask, "Little bookseller, what now?" Are you making it any easier for the shop which is waging a valiant war against intellectual inertia and the sheep-like character of reading taste, when you attack the whole kit and caboodle of us, as you did in the *Saturday Review?* I'm not taking it too seriously, and the world is certainly not turned upside down, but I just want you to know that I, for one, am not leading any customer around "like a bull with a ring in his nose"!

Faithfully yours,

_____

NOTE:

Our ad about Anthony Bertram's LIKE THE PHOENIX stirred up a regular hornet's-nest of reactions. Little did we suspect that we'd become an open forum, with more fan and pan mail than we've ever had in our lives! Evidently there's a lot of thinking going on—and some fiery writing—of which we wish to share with the alert readers of *The Saturday Review* one intelligent critical letter, written without rancor.

WILLIAM MORROW & CO.

386 Fourth Avenue **New York, N. Y.**

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Alexander Woollcott called THE LEAGUE OF FRIGHTENED MEN by REX STOUT "the best detective story of 1935."

Rex Stout's
THE RUBBER BAND

The new NERO WOLFE mystery

IN the short space of two years, since October 1934 in fact, Rex Stout has become one of the best known and most popular mystery story writers in America, with thousands of followers. He started life as a successful business man . . . retired . . . and then began to write novels. He produced, first, a group of realistic novels much praised by the critics, including *Seed on the Wind* and *Forest Fire*. In 1934 he decided to write mystery stories and conceived the character of *Nero Wolfe*. From the start it was apparent that he was bringing to the writing of mystery stories an intelligence and wit that rarely finds its way into this type of fiction. The Nero Wolfe stories have received high praise not only from critics, but from detectives, policemen, and crime experts. The new one, *The Rubber Band,* has plenty of snap. And by a long stretch is his most exciting.

Fer-de-Lance

Here's what the critics said about *Fer-de-Lance,* the mystery story in which Nero Wolfe made his bow: "To the select company of old maestros among the detectives of fiction add the refulgent name of Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe."—*John Chamberlain.* "One of the best murder stories I have read in twenty years. It is an absolute masterpiece!"—*William Lyon Phelps.* "A streamline crime book . . . crisp, smart, up-to-date."—*New York Times.*

The League of Frightened Men

And this is what they said about *The League of Frightened Men,* Nero Wolfe's second: "Run, don't walk, to your nearest bookshop and get yourself the best mystery of the season."—*N. Y. Daily News.* "Here's your best mystery bet of the moment, another bang-up triumph by Nero Wolfe."—*Will Cuppy.*

AT ALL BOOKSHOPS, EACH $2.00.

FARRAR & RINEHART, 232 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK

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